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RUTHERFORD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Cover- Christiana Depot about 1900 by Jim Matheny

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A HISTORY  
of  
RUTHERFORD COUNTY RAILROAD DEPOTS  
by  
JUDY LEE GREEN

This paper is not meant to be a definitive statement on the history of depots in Rutherford County but can best be utilized as a stop along the line of road, much as the depots themselves were passenger stops along the railroad track. I am continuing to collect information relating to Rutherford County railroad stations whether it be written documentation, photographs, post cards, or memories. Please contact me if you have something you would like to contribute. To share history is to preserve it.

Judy Lee Green

893-0973

October, 1981

A HISTORY  
of  
RUTHERFORD COUNTY RAILROAD DEPOTS

The iron horse first burst through Rutherford County in 1851, huffing, puffing, smoking, shrieking, whistling a song that signaled the beginning of an era for Middle Tennesseans. It brought visitors, strangers and relatives alike; news; mail; merchandise; and promises of economic opportunities and social activities. It gave birth to the railroad depot which sprang up in its wake and, in turn, spawned towns, produced industry, and created the legendary station agent whose accomplishments will be preserved in the collective folklore of railroad pioneers.

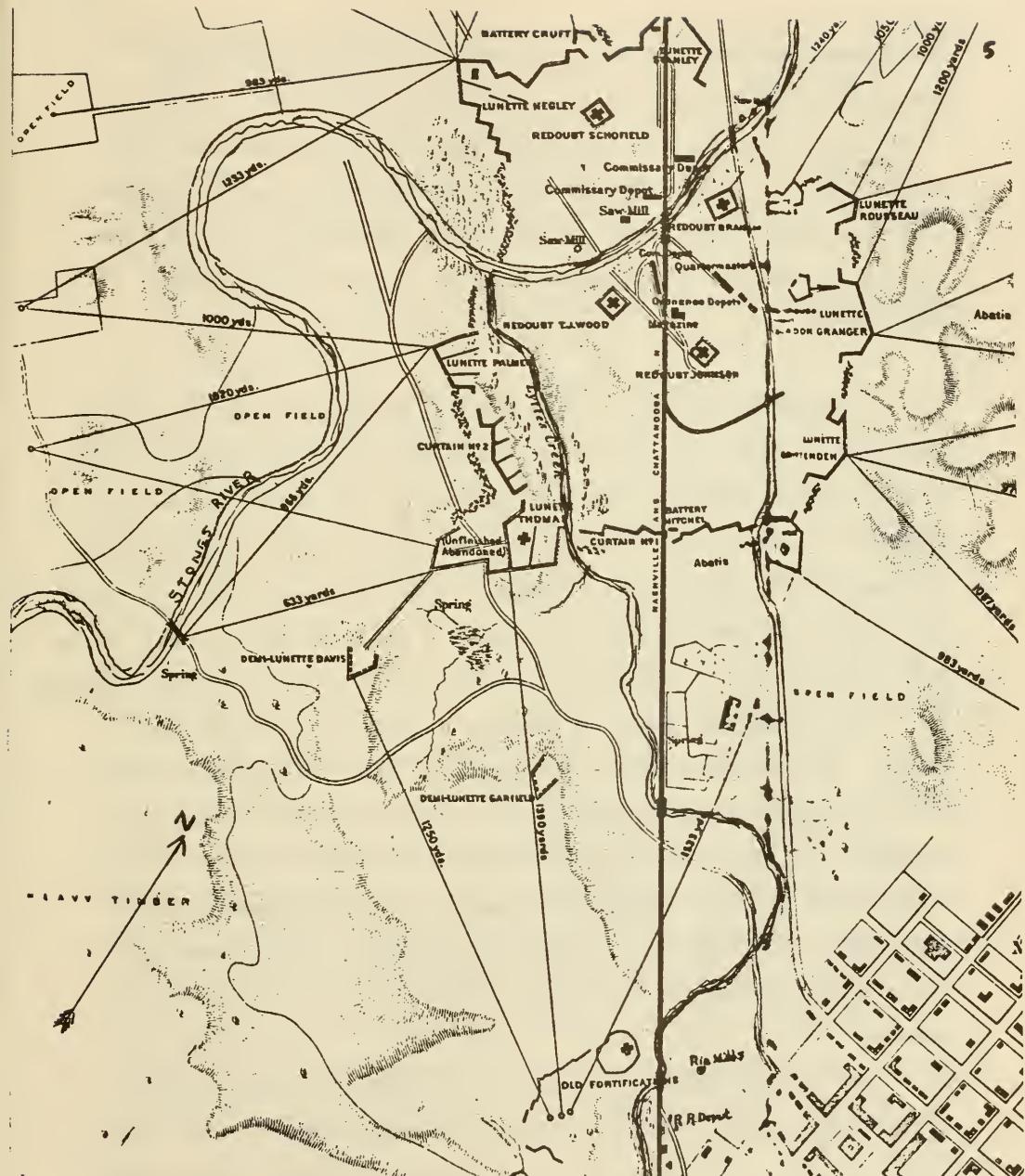
In the mid-eighteen hundreds there were no railroads operating in Tennessee. James A. Whiteside, a member of the state legislature from Hamilton County, and Dr. James Overton from Nashville, Tennessee, were responsible for the charter that the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad received in 1845. Vernon K. Stevenson, who was named president when the railroad was organized in 1848,<sup>1</sup> went from house to house soliciting funds in support of the proposed organization. Residents of Murfreesboro contributed \$30,000 toward the purchase of capital stock,<sup>2</sup> so eager were they for the railroad to be routed through their town.<sup>3</sup>

In December, 1848, a contract was let to build the road

from Nashville to the Rutherford County line, and on June 19 of the following year the sections from Fly's Curve at Kimbro to Murfreesboro and from Murfreesboro to the Duck River were let.<sup>4</sup> When completed in 1851, nearly thirty miles of track extended from the northwest corner of Rutherford County at LaVergne to the southern portion of the county at Fosterville.<sup>5</sup> During the next fifty years, woodsheds, water stations, flag stops, and an undetermined number of depots, both freight and passenger, were constructed at strategic spots along the track that ran through Rutherford County.

The first passenger train arrived in Murfreesboro on July 4, 1851. A crowd of fifteen hundred people from Nashville joined the entire population of Rutherford County to welcome the Tennessee.<sup>6</sup> A great celebration was held to commemorate the event that was predicted to open up a whole new world of business, not only for the railroad but for farmers and businessmen as well.

The exact date and location of the first depot in Rutherford County is not known. A freight house, however, had been constructed at Murfreesboro in 1851.<sup>7</sup> Utilized by both armies, if this structure survived the Civil War, it is possible that it was razed by the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad when a brick freight and passenger depot was constructed in 1867 at the Salem Pike crossing. This building became strictly a freight house when a brick passenger station was erected at the end of West Main Street in 1887.<sup>8</sup> Constructed by the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway, this simple, rectangular-shaped,



This 1863 map of Civil War Murfreesboro is the only evidence I have found that establishes the location of the 1851 depot. Note structure south of Rio Mills.

one-story complex featured a passenger terminal and baggage house adjoined track side by a butterfly train shed. Though it is now a freight agency and no longer a passenger stop, the Murfreesboro depot, with few exterior alterations, still stands today, a property of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. The following physical description will be of interest to future historians.

A concrete foundation supports the Murfreesboro depot, which features a brick exterior of common bond design and a hipped composition roof which, prior to 1968, was of the original roofing material, slate. Fenestration includes multi-paned windows with concrete sills and plain surrounds. Single leaf, glazed, and paneled doors are enhanced by transoms. A small projecting bay on the west side of the structure originally served as an operator's office.

Three concrete bands or courses completely surround the depot. The doorways and four corners of the building have vertical concrete reinforcement areas located between the two lower courses. In addition, at the corners and doorways are conical-shaped cast concrete decorative components approximately three feet high. Utilitarian as well as decorative, they served as bumpers to protect the building from damage done by railroad wagons.

The broad projecting eaves of the hipped roof are characterized by exposed rafters and wooden brackets which rest on concrete corbels. The roof itself is enhanced by two conical-shaped

dormers featuring louvers on the east and west sides and bearing the date of construction, 1887, on the north and south ends. Alterations, which include the removal of two cross gables on the east facade, a larger cross gable over the operator's bay, two chimneys, and decorative ridge trim, were made when the building was reroofed in 1968.

The interior of the former NC&StL RR terminal featured eighteen feet ceilings, potbellied stoves, wainscoting, and decorative bulls-eye motif corner blocks on door surrounds. Segregated waiting rooms and restroom facilities were provided for blacks and whites. The ticket office and operator's bay were located in the center of the spatial arrangement. Though the interiority of the building has suffered major alterations including lowered ceilings, tiled floors, the addition of walls, and the application of green paint on woodwork and even window panes, evidences of an earlier day when steam was king can still be found. The integrity of the depot has not suffered irreversible changes, only unsympathetic ones.

Located approximately thirty feet from the depot and connected by a continuous butterfly shed, which features steel posts and wooden beams and braces, is a smaller replica of the passenger station, the baggage house. Currently it is used as a signal maintainer's office and storeroom. Though there is some controversy as to whether this building was erected in 1887 or was built a few years later, it features the same characteristics as the depot, the three encircling bands, the multi-paned windows, a brick exterior, and a hipped roof. The interior of this building, however, is brick, and its doorways include two sliding service doors of

diagonal boards. Prior to 1968 this building also featured a chimney and decorative ridge trim on the roof.

At least three depots have served the citizens of Murfreesboro. Built 1851, 1867, and 1887, the latter one still stands in its now-neglected garden-like setting, a silent reminder of an unique American architectural form.

C. C. Henderson, in The Story of Murfreesboro, identifies the first railroad ticket agent as William (Doc) Ledbetter.<sup>9</sup> Henderson seems to imply, however, that Ledbetter served the depot constructed in 1867 and makes no reference to the 1851 depot or its agents.

Perhaps the best known and most celebrated agent was John W. Thomas, who began his career as manager of the railroad hotel in Murfreesboro and served almost fifty years in the employ of the N&C and (after 1872) the NC&StL Railroads. In November, 1858, Thomas was appointed agent at Murfreesboro<sup>10</sup> because of his familiarity with railroad details. In due time he was recognized as keeping the most accurate records on the line of road.<sup>11</sup> As local agent it became his responsibility to attend to the movement of supplies and munitions for the Confederate forces when the Civil War became a reality in Middle Tennessee. He distinguished himself by removing to the South and protecting valuable records and rolling stock belonging to the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. For the return after the war of railroad property, Thomas was promoted to auditor and paymaster,<sup>12</sup> the first of many promotions which culminated in the presidency of the NC&StL Railroad, a position



In 1867 this brick passenger depot was constructed at the Salem Pike railroad crossing by the N&C Ry. This photograph was taken in 1971. The depot was later razed by the L&N RR.



This NC&StL Ry station was erected in 1887. It still stands at the end of W. Main St. in Murfreesboro. (1976 photo)

he held for twenty-two years until his death in 1906.<sup>13</sup>

Murfreesboro was founded in 1811<sup>14</sup> and named for Col. Hardy Murfree prior to the coming of the railroad. Other points along the road, however, developed as a result of the railroad's influence. Stewartsboro, located on Stewart Creek near the Nashville Pike, was a busy little community whose business was transferred to Smyrna after the railroad was completed.<sup>15</sup> A freight and passenger house combined, designated as third class, was erected in 1851. By December of the same year a woodshed and a water station had also been constructed.<sup>16</sup> Adjoining land, purchased by the railroad company, was subdivided into sixty-four lots and offered for sale at public auction.<sup>17</sup> Silas Tucker, former owner of the land, may have been given the honor of naming the station and, subsequently, the town of Smyrna.<sup>18</sup> On May 13, 1850, he donated four acres of land for the establishment of the present town, after selling thirty-six and three-fourths acres to the railroad company.<sup>19</sup>

The fate of Smyrna's first depot is not known. In 1873, however, a brick structure, a combination freight and passenger depot, was erected by the newly merged Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway.<sup>20</sup> This building still stands today though it has been remodeled extensively. An increase in rail traffic during World War II brought many alterations. Also, a train wreck in July, 1950, damaged much of the building and demolished the entire south end.<sup>21</sup>

Today the Smyrna depot is located between the main line and the house track of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, east of the

old business district and west of Highway 41. A rectangular-shaped structure with a brick exterior of common or American bond design, it sits on a concrete foundation with a six inch concrete course surrounding its entirety at ground level. A split roof line is the only commentary on its boxcar-like appearance. A chimney punctuates the roof line on the west, the most original and least altered of the four sides of the building.

Although exposed timber rafters and wooden brackets project from beneath the eaves of the gabled depot roof, four original brackets, more decorative than the others, still remain on the west side. Likewise, four iron braces support the brick wall, their tie rod plates visible on the interior. The Smyrna railroad station also features flat concrete lintels, brick sills, and simple, uncomplicated fenestration (4/4, large windows; 3/3, small windows with glazed transoms above). Service doors are located on the north and south ends and the west side. The north opening has an original eight foot by eight foot sliding door with diagonal boards.

The interior of the former Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway depot originally featured a freight house on the south end; waiting rooms, restrooms, and office space in the central portion; and a baggage room on the north end.

The freight house, or warehouse, on the south end is accessible by two of the service doors mentioned above. Originally the interior of this section was brick covered by a hard thick plaster. Walls have now been stabilized by concrete blocks. The ceiling

is twelve feet high in this end of the building. A large floor scale for weighing freight remains in the room.

The central section of the depot formerly contained separate waiting rooms for blacks and whites with ceiling heights of ten feet and concrete floors; restrooms, which were modified in space configuration during World War II, making larger facilities available for the many soldiers who traveled by rail; and an agent's office featuring a ticket counter. Prior to the train mishap in July, 1950, an operator's bay was located on the west side of the depot. It was destroyed by the derailment, however, and was not reconstructed when repairs were made to the building.

The north end of the depot was the baggage room, a temporary shelter for trunks, suitcases, and mail bags. The third and original service door is still operative here. During the 1940s a low-pitched gabled roofed (carport-type) shed was constructed off the baggage room on the extreme north end of the building. Supported by six square wooden pillars, the roof provided protection from the elements for the many traveling soldiers who could not be accommodated in the small waiting room of the station during World War II.

The Smyrna depot is no longer utilized as a passenger station, nor does it provide office space for agents and operators. A L&N Railroad signal maintainer and local train crew use the building on a limited basis today. Formerly an important station and a busy stop on the railroad, the train depot with its peeling white paint, crumbling brick walls, falling plaster, and decaying wood trim is an embarrassing conclusion to the history of rail-

road architecture in Smyrna. As the oldest depot in Rutherford County still standing today, it deserves more consideration than it has received in the past few years. Never an elaborate or superfluous structure, the architectural contribution of the rural railroad station is based on the very nature of its ubiquity.

Smyrna was not the only railroad station constructed in 1873 by the newly merged Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway Company. Florence, a combination passenger and freight depot, was erected in the same year midway between Murfreesboro and Smyrna. Named for the daughter of a station agent,<sup>22</sup> Florence was a brick structure measuring twenty-five by fifty feet and constructed at a cost of \$2,647. The railroad retired this building in 1927. Adjoining stock pens built in 1900 were retired in 1946.<sup>23</sup>

Christiana, a small settlement located near the Fosterville community, was originally called Jordan's Valley. Apparently the name Christiana was given to a Nashville and Chattanooga Railway depot erected when the railroad passed through Rutherford County. Eventually the area became known by that name.

It has been alleged that James Grant, construction engineer for the building of the railroad, was responsible for the naming of all stations between Nashville and Chattanooga.<sup>24</sup> Historical evidence does not support this contention, however, in regard to Rutherford County depots.

Whether Christiana was named in honor of a black railroad cook, Christie Anna; or for a black child, Christ Daniel; or for



Smyrna, constructed in 1873, is Rutherford County's oldest existing depot. Built by the NC&StL Ry, it has been altered extensively. (1976 photo)



Fosterville, built in 1890 by the NC&StL Ry, was the second depot in the small community to suffer a tragic conclusion. (1976 photo)

the wife or sweetheart of an early railroader is not known.<sup>25</sup> It is known, however, that James Grant was the first railroad agent at Christiana.<sup>26</sup> Though the construction date of the first depot appears not to have been recorded, a woodshed and horse-powered water station had been erected by December, 1851.<sup>27</sup>

James Grant left the service of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railway in 1859 but returned to their employ after the Civil War.<sup>28</sup> He passed away in 1869 before the second depot was constructed.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, the first Christiana railroad station was erected between 1851-1859 or between 1865-1869, probably the earlier date. It is reasonable to assume that a structure erected after the Civil War would not have been replaced by a new building in 1882. If the depot was built before the war, however, it may have been damaged or unavoidably neglected by the railroad during the conflict.

The second Christiana depot, a combination passenger and freight station, was erected in 1882 by the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway.<sup>30</sup> A frame building of board and batten construction, it featured a low-pitched gabled roof of tin, overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets, simple fenestration, and doorways graced by transoms. A wooden platform around the building was enhanced by a picket underpinning. The structure was retired from service by the railroad company in 1942.<sup>31</sup>

The following notice appeared in the Murfreesboro Free Press, Friday, September 27, 1889: "The long-wished-for new depot is in course of construction at Rucker."<sup>32</sup> No other information was given, and subsequent newspapers available revealed no additional

information. One can only speculate as to whether the word "new" indicates the existence of an "old" depot.

The new Rucker train station, however, was a combination passenger and freight depot. It was erected at a cost of \$2,199.00 by the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway. Rucker was retired from service in 1942 after serving more than fifty years.. Adjoining stock pens built in 1911 were utilized until 1923.<sup>33</sup>

Old Fosterville, located in the southeast corner of Rutherford County, was incorporated in 1832. It is thought to have been named after John Foster, an early settler. When the Nashville and Chattanooga Railway was completed in 1851, however, the small community was relocated to advantage itself of the railroad. Responsible for the move and the present site of Fosterville was Thomas Edwards, postmaster, station master, and railroad express agent.<sup>34</sup>

No construction date is available for the first depot served by Thomas Edwards and built by the Nashville and Chattanooga Railway. Did this building survive the Civil War? Was it the same depot still standing in 1886 when Goodspeed recorded that railroad business at Fosterville amounted to \$5,000 a year?<sup>35</sup> If so, this depot was destroyed in March, 1890, when a ravaging cyclone demolished the Fosterville community.<sup>36</sup>

The Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway erected a combination passenger station and freight depot to replace the decimated structure after the storm in 1890. The floor dimensions of the new building measured twenty-four by seventy-five feet. It was constructed at a cost of \$3,531.00.<sup>37</sup> Of board and batten con-

struction, the building was simple and typical of rural railroad stations. It featured a low-pitched gabled roof with wide over-hanging eaves, decorative scrolled brackets reinforced by iron rods, transoms, and doorways of diagonal boards.

The railroad retired the Fosterville agency in 1942. Adjoining stock pens, built in 1911, were retired in 1944.<sup>38</sup> The depot was purchased by a private individual, moved from its original site and relocated nearby. There it stood until March 26, 1977, when Fosterville lost its second depot. The building was consumed by fire, apparently the work of arsonists who saw no architectural value in the diminished splendor of the agrarian railroad station, a tragic end to depot history in the Fosterville community.

The completion of the railroad through Rutherford County brought prosperity soon after 1851 to a small community located in the northeast corner. LaVergne, named for an early settler, Francois Leonard Gregoire de Roulhac de LaVergne,<sup>40</sup> was incorporated by an act of the General Assembly in 1861.<sup>41</sup>

By December, 1852, a steam-powered water station had been completed at LaVergne,<sup>42</sup> though the construction date of the first depot is unknown. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that in order for the railroad to have an effect on the economy<sup>43</sup> in the area, a railroad station must have been in use. This was probably the same building acknowledged in December, 1862, by General William Starke Rosecrans as he advanced with his Federal forces towards Murfreesboro preceding the Battle of Stone's River and found La-Vergne "to be a small village with a desirable railroad depot that

could move men and supplies closer to Murfreesboro."<sup>44</sup>

There is no evidence at this time to suggest that the LaVergne depot was destroyed during the Civil War. Assuming that it withstood the use and misuse of an occupying army, it was probably still standing in late 1867 or early 1868 when James Richard Park, an employee of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railway, was promoted to station agent at LaVergne. Cherry Shade, located across from the railroad station, became the home of Park and his new bride. Not only did the dedicated railroad employee keep his own home and yard neat and attractive, but he planted flowers to make the depot pleasant and more enjoyable for the many people who traveled by rail before the turn of the century.<sup>45</sup>

The fate of LaVergne's first depot is unknown. It was probably razed by the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway in 1901 when a new passenger terminal and freight station was erected. The frame building of board and batten construction, measured thirty by eighty feet. It stood between the main line and the house track of the NC&StL Railway, near the present site of the Tennessee Farmers Co-op. Constructed at a cost of \$3,764.00, LaVergne's second depot served the community for fifty years before it was retired by the NC&StL Railway in 1951.<sup>46</sup>

Shelters for the comfort and convenience of revenue passengers were constructed by the railroad at intervals throughout Rutherford County. Known as flag stops, they were designated as points for trains to receive passengers when flagged or to discharge them along the line of road. Caretakers were sometimes employed by the

railroad, but agents were not assigned to these locations.

Winstead, located four miles south of Murfreesboro, was a flag stop though no shelter seems to have existed at that location. It is not known at this time whether a shelter stood at Russell, located north of Murfreesboro on the railroad line. A flag stop existed at the National Cemetery though the date of construction is unavailable. The Jefferson Pike stop, located between LaVergne and Smyrna, was built in 1902.<sup>47</sup>

The Wade flag stop was constructed in 1905. A tiny fourteen by sixteen feet, it featured a board and batten exterior and was erected at a cost of \$632.00. Its small size and physical appearance was probably typical of the other shelters constructed along the railroad line. Wade was located two miles south of Smyrna and four miles north of the Florence depot. The railroad retired the structure in 1936.<sup>48</sup>

The depot or railroad station for almost a century was the focal point of many small towns. In Rutherford County, March 15, 1968, marked the end of an era in railroad history. As the last passenger train regularly scheduled to stop at Murfreesboro pulled into the station in the early hours of the morning, not even the local agent was on hand to greet it. The last "All aboard!" must have echoed off the empty walls, quite a contrast to the hullabaloo created by the arrival of the first passenger train in Murfreesboro more than a hundred years earlier.

Gone are the steam engines, the passenger trains. The clickity-clack of the "limiteds," the "expresses," and the "flyers"

has been replaced by the roar and the rumble of the 747s and the DC9s. Gone are the station agents, and gone are eleven of the thirteen depots that have served as the economic and social centers throughout Rutherford County. We must rejoice in our nostalgic moments, however, for through the preservation of dim records, faded photographs, and tales of old men, our children and grandchildren will be able to recapture the romanticism of the railroad era and re-create the glory of the depot in its finest moment.



Mufreesboro Depot about 1900

## RAILROAD ROUTE

Nashville

LaVergne - 2 depots - c.1851; 1901

\* Jefferson Pike - flag stop - 1902

Smyrna - 2 depots - 1851; 1873

\* Wade - flag stop - 1905

\* Florence - 1 depot - 1873

Russell - flag stop - shelter unknown

National Cemetery - flag stop - no date

Murfreesboro - 3 depots - 1851; 1867; 1887

N Winstead-flag stop - no shelter

Rucker - 1 depot - 1889

Christiana - 2 depots - c.1851; 1882

S

\* Fosterville - 2 depots - c.1851; 1890

W + E

\* Chattanooga

This map identifies the locations and construction dates of 13 Rutherford County depots and 5 flag stops. (I suspect there were others. This is not meant to be a scaled drawing. JLG)

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Richard E. Prince, Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway (Green River, Wyo.: Richard E. Prince, 1967), p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>T. D. Clark, "The Development of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad," Tennessee Historical Magazine, III, No. 3 (1935), p. 167.

<sup>3</sup>Goodspeed's General History of Tennessee (Nashville: Goodspeed Pub. Co., 1887), p. 816.

<sup>4</sup>Thomas N. Johns, Sr., "The Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad through Rutherford County, 1845-1872," Rutherford County Historical Society, No. 5 (1975), p. 10.

<sup>5</sup>Goodspeed.

<sup>6</sup>Johns, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>8</sup>Structures Section, Engineering Dept., L&N Railroad, Louisville, Ky.

<sup>9</sup>C. C. Henderson, The Story of Murfreesboro (M'Boro.: News-Banner Pub. Co., 1929), p. 115.

<sup>10</sup>John W. Thomas (NC&St.L Ry., no date), pp. 7-8.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 8-9.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>14</sup>Goodspeed, p. 826.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 834.

<sup>16</sup>Johns, p. 16.

<sup>17</sup>Walter K. Hoover, History of the Town of Smyrna, Tennessee (Nashville: McQuiddy, 1968), p. 5.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 338.

<sup>20</sup>Structures Section, L&N RR.

<sup>21</sup>Hoover, p. 344.

<sup>22</sup> Griffith (Rutherford Co. Bicentennial Commission, 1976).

<sup>23</sup> Structures Section, L&N RR.

<sup>24</sup> Johns, pp. 11-12.

<sup>25</sup> Griffith.

<sup>26</sup> Johns, p. 12.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>29</sup> Mary B. Hughes, Hearthstones (M'Boro.: Mid-South Pub. Co., 1942; reprint ed., 1960), p. 54.

<sup>30</sup> Structures Section, L&N RR.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Free Press, 27 Sept. 1889, p. 1; (MFM 84, 1820-1950 Newspapers).

<sup>33</sup> Structures Section, L&N RR.

<sup>34</sup> Elvira Brothers, "The story of Fosterville," Rutherford County Historical Society, No. 16 (1981), pp. 44-46.

<sup>35</sup> Goodspeed, p. 819.

<sup>36</sup> Brothers, p. 47.

<sup>37</sup> Structures Section, L&N RR.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> "Fires Strike County; Old Depot Burns," Daily News Journal, 27 March 1977, p. 1. cols. 2-3.

<sup>40</sup> Griffith.

<sup>41</sup> Goodspeed, p. 834.

<sup>42</sup> Johns, p. 16.

<sup>43</sup> Shirley Chaney, "History of LaVergne," Rutherford County Historical Society, No. 6 (1976), p. 63.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>45</sup> James L. Chrisman, "A Story of Cherry Shade, LaVergne, Tennessee," Rutherford County Historical Society, No. 16 (1981), pp. 64-65.

<sup>46</sup> Structures Section, L&N RR. <sup>47</sup> Griffith.

<sup>48</sup> Structures Section, L&N RR.

M Y   F A M I L Y

F O U N T H E N R Y R I O N

1958

-1-

Thomas Osborn, settled in Virginia 1616, was  
Justice in 1631 and Member House of Burgess  
in 1639.

-2-

---



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-3-

Thomas Osborn  
Martha

-4-

John Osborn  
Ann

-5-

Thomas Osborn  
Jane Patterson

-6-

Caleb Osborn	1751 - 1799
Susannah Jewell	1762 - 1803

-7-

Johnathan Osborn	1793 - 1877
Hannah Spinning	1793 - 1863

-8-

Harvey Osborn	1815 - 1886
Ann C. Reed	1817 - 1863

-9-

Sallie E. Osborn	1840 - 1916
Fountain J. Henry	1836 - 1871

-10-

Nettie E. Henry	1860 - 1945
William J. Rion	1857 - 1887

-11-

Ellen Ann Rion	1880 - 1964
Robert Caldwell	1874 - 1931

-12-

Ellen Rion Caldwell	1906
James Lawson Fleming	

Amanda Caldwell      1911

Sarah Caldwell      1916  
Walter Greene

## PREFACE

All of my life I have felt a desire to know more about my family connections but have done little to really satisfy that desire which seems to have been rather deep rooted even when I was a child.

I have pleasant and satisfying memories which date back to that period, for then a great many of the older generation were still living and told me of interesting things that happened in that long ago. Most vivid of these memories were the talks with my grandma Henry.

Then, a cousin, Howard E. Ronk was traveling around the country visiting and interviewing members of the Osborn family, about whom he was writing a history. These and many others with whom I had the privilege of talking, gave me much interesting information.

My father having died when I was only three and one half years old, and all of his family connections except Uncle Ed Rion, still living out in the country, I had little or no opportunity to know them or to be associated with them. This, of course, gave me a greater desire to know more about them.

I visited in Murfreesboro every summer during my childhood and had association with the Henrys, the Osborns, the Reeds and others, but the Rions and Jones lived out at Lascassas and Hall's Hill and these were twelve to fifteen miles away and in those days of only horse and buggy travel, made it impossible for me.

Not until the summer of 1904 was I able to satisfy this desire, but during that summer, mother and I made a visit to Aunt Fanny Rion Phillip's and her family, who were then living out beyond Lascassas.

In addition to the most interesting conversations with Aunt Fanny who had lived in that country all of her life, and other interesting facts

brought out by my mother, who went out there to live after she married,- we took an all day long buggy ride through all that country,- over to the old original Francis P. Rion home, built between 1825 and 1830 near Hall's Hill, and the old original Jones home across the road, built about 1796.

The trip in 1904 was difficult as there were only crude roads including these portions of road which ran through and along creek beds, all of which emphasized in my mind how difficult travel was in those days of a hundred years previous when our pioneer ancestors sought these new homes. No roads, not even trails. Travel possible only following rivers or smaller streams and often they found it necessary to axe out a new trail through the untouched wilderness.

Still living in the old Jones house at the time of our visit in 1904 were some of the descendants of the Enoch Jones family who received us graciously and treated us royally. They told me interesting stories about the old house, the barns, slave quarters and the country around about, tales which had been handed down during the previous hundred years.

Nearby was the house in which my father was born and it was a thrill to be there and to see and drink from the wonderful old spring at the foot of the hill where, Aunt Fanny told us, papa used to go to get water for the family.

We also visited the Will Jones place. Uncle Will Jones was a brother of my father's mother,- and while I have no positive information on this, I feel very sure that my father, William, was named for his Uncle Will Jones. I enjoyed talking with these wonderful people. I am sure I am correct in my impression that Uncle Will and Aunt Veenie Jones were the favorites of both papa and mother, of all their family connections.

Then one of the most interesting events on that day's trip was a

visit to the old Enoch Jones cemetery. This was beautiful and the most pretentious private, country cemetery I had ever seen. It was surrounded by a substantial stone wall, capped with wide smooth stones and gates of wrought iron. The masonry was as fine a job as I have ever seen anywhere.

The dominant feature was a tall white marble shaft to the memory of Enoch Hunt Jones, my great-grandfather. My grandmother, Nancy Jones Rion, was buried near her father and her grave marked with a simple slab. Many other family graves were well marked and contained much family history.

Back in Murfreesboro on this same trip, I visited Uncle Wash Henry and there talked Henry family with him.

During all this I made many notes, had received many pictures and other keepsakes, - but in 1925 when the house at Brentwood burned, all those things were lost.

Then for the thirty or more years intervening, I have been much, much too busy to give more than fleeting thoughts to this matter of family connections, however, the impelling thought that I should do something about it, had recently been quickened by the realization that I had an obligation to my children and grandchildren who have had little or no opportunity to know anything about their ancestral family. I was determined to do something about it, so with the hope that some may have an interest in such things, I have, using the information I already had as a basis, made considerable research and investigation and have attempted to compile, and in the pages which follow, to record some of these findings.

Realizing that exactly the same lineage applies to my sister's children, I am taking the liberty of having sufficient copies prepared so that each of her three daughters may have one.

Several years ago, I wrote a "Family History" to be included in my

book for my children "You Asked For It." I now find that some of the latest data I have secured does not always coincide with that previously written. This is understandable when we consider some of the facts I have been trying to uncover date back in some instances to more than two hundred years.

I will not go back and make any changes in that previous story for that is very different in character from this one as the previous one contains copies of many personal letters.

In this story, I have tried, in so far as resources permit, to identify as many as possible of our ancestors who served in the American Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. These identified by records are:

William Rion	Army of Maryland
Lt. Thomas Gayle	Army of Virginia
Ezekiel Jones	Army of Virginia
George Henry	Army of Virginia
Ambrose Jeffries	Army of Virginia
Col. Peter Dudley	Army of Virginia
William Williams	Army of Virginia
Caleb Osborn	Army of New Jersey

Any historian, biographer or genealogist must, of necessity, rely upon piecing together bits of information, often very small bits, in creating the story, and especially in my case (such an amateur) there is always a chance that some inaccuracies may creep in.

It is my sincere hope that those who read this may have a greater esteem and appreciation for those who have gone on before us, and have laid the foundations for an America which is great and as a result of their pioneer labors and great sacrifice, we now live our lives more abundantly.

I want to acknowledge with sincere appreciation, my indebtedness to all sources of help and inspiration that I have received in preparing this:

INDIVIDUALS

Ruth White Cook, Murfreesboro, Tennessee  
 (Daughter of Ora Rion White)

Nannie Phillips Gray, Fountain City, Tennessee  
 (Daughter of Fanny Rion Phillips)

Hilda Jones Dunn, Washington, D. C.  
 (Daughter of Will Macklin Jones)

Lucie M. Browning, Culpepper, Virginia  
 (Researcher)

Howard E. Ronk - (Deceased)  
 (Historian of Osborn family)

ORGANIZATIONS

The Library of Congress  
 Washington, D. C.

National Archives and Research Service  
 Washington, D. C.

Tennessee State Library and Archives  
 Nashville, Tennessee

Virginia Historical Society  
 Richmond, Virginia

PUBLICATIONS

"The Culpeper Minute Men" Slaughter

"Historical Register of Virginians  
 in the Revolution" Gwathmey

"Genealogies" (Mostly Virginian) C. Marriott

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## RION

In colonial Virginia, there were many French people. They had left their own land, some secretly in small ships and many driven out by religious persecution. They were Protestants (called Huguenots).

During the 16th and 17th centuries the contest between the Catholic party and the Protestant (Huguenot) party in France was bitter. The contest was as much political as religious.

After bloody struggles the Protestants fled to their fortified towns and carried on the war with varying success.

In 1593, the Huguenots had secured their civil rights, and the right to free exercise of their religion. They were also given equal claims with the Catholics to all offices and dignities. They were also afforded the means of forming a kind of Republic within the Kingdom, which Richelieu regarded as a serious obstacle to the growth of the Royal power, hence, he resolved to crush it.

The war raged from 1624 to 1629 when La Rochelle, the principal fortress of the Huguenots, fell before the Royal troops.

Persecution continued under King Louis XIV.

In 1685, about 50,000 Protestants were driven out of France to other countries. While many were driven out, many left by choice.

In the year 1700, seven hundred French settlers came to Virginia. The shores of this region were not unknown to the Huguenots. The mild climate attracted them and they gladly sought refuge there among the English.

It was with this background, and in the midst of this political and religious intrigue that the first RION of which we have any record, came to America.

And, in the midst of that bloody struggle in France, stood the town of RION.

While so many leaders on both sides, alike, were using the bitter spirit of religious controversy for their personal advantage, the RION family (or clan) was busy trying to keep peace and order so as to hold their town intact.

The RION clan, prominent in France at that time, owned lands with castles built on the estates. They served as Huguenots in these religious wars until they were forced to leave France.

The RIONS were in America before 1725, as shown on the military enlistment of WILLIAM RION, Sr. who was born in Maryland in 1750, later moving to Charlotte County, Virginia where he died.

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WILLIAM JAMES RION, my father, was born on May 23, 1857 near Halls Hill in Rutherford County, Tennessee. He was the son of Thomas D. Rion and Nancy Ann (Nannie) Jones.

He grew up on the farm where he was born and later the family moved over near Lascassas where he worked with his father in the business of buying, selling and trading livestock. They would buy up large numbers of horses, mules, cows, sheep, hogs and when the Nashville market was right, they would drive the herd or flock through the country from Murfreesboro to the stock yards in Nashville, requiring two to three days to make the trip of thirty-two miles. That was before the railroad began hauling livestock in freight cars.

On December 17, 1879 he and my mother, Nettie Ellen Henry, were married in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Murfreesboro, with the Rev. J. H. Warren officiating. It was a big wedding, with six attendants, all

cousins of the bride, with one exception. The groomsmen were Charles E. Hendrix, William F. Henry, Charles W. Henry and the bridesmaids were Lillie B. Elliott, Maggie E. Hendrix and Maggie Ralston. The two Henry boys were sons of Uncle Wash Henry of Murfreesboro, while Charles E. Hendrix and his sister Maggie E. Hendrix were the son and daughter of Uncle "Billy" and Aunt Jane Reed Hendrix, then of McKenzie, Tennessee,- Lillie B. Elliott, a first cousin, daughter of Aunt Nannie Henry Elliott, and Maggie Ralston was a school chum at Soule College in Murfreesboro, and no relation. These six attendants all signed the wedding certificate, as official witnesses.

In a letter from Maggie Hendrix, some three weeks after the wedding, she speaks of her "new cousin Willie" in most complimentary terms. Evidently mother had sent her one of the wedding pictures of herself and papa, for Maggie writes:

Your note containing the picture, was received yesterday. Many thanks. All pronounce Cousin Willie a handsome young man and highly compliment the good taste you displayed in the selection of such a man as his photo indicates and as I know him to be. All extend to you their hearty congratulations for a bright, a happy and useful life in the future."

"It is needless for me to tell you that I fell very much in love with Cousin Willie, for you already know that. I was so very anxious to remain longer and spend a few days with you in your new home, out on the banks of that lovely little Middle Tennessee stream."

Papa had first met my mother at a party, and it was "love at first sight." That night she was wearing a dress trimmed in a ball fringe. After the party, she missed one of the little balls and couldn't find it, but after their wedding she discovered that papa had it in his wallet. He had secretly cut it off at the party and had carried it ever since. (NOTE: I now have the wallet and the ball).

Although "love at first sight" there was much to be considered in this proposed marriage. Evidently young William was a very handsome and highly worthy young man. He was six feet, one inch tall, in his sock feet and weighed 175 pounds and was of a very lovable personality. But, his only life had been that of a country boy and his young bride of nineteen would have to share that kind of life, although she had never known anything of that kind.

All investigations as to character, fitness, background, etc. seems to have worked out very satisfactorily, for the wedding did take place and they were settled in that - "new home, out on the banks of that lovely little Middle Tennessee stream." (NOTE: I visited this place in 1904 and again recently - in 1958)

But life in this new home became anything but satisfactory to either of them. In the meanwhile Uncle Tommy Henry had gone to Nashville and had secured a very satisfactory job. Papa sought to follow him and also make a try for a job in the city.

On November 24, 1880 the first baby was born, - my sister. Mother had gone into town in Murfreesboro so she could be with her mother for this occasion. She never returned to the country to live.

Under date of February 25, 1881, papa wrote mother from Nashville on the stationery of "BAIRD & JAMESON", "Staple and Fancy Groceries", 139 Church Street, stating he had secured a job there which was very satisfactory.

In the meanwhile, Grandma had moved to Nashville to make a home for Uncle Tommy (her son) and papa went to live with them so mother and the baby could follow soon.

I now have among my keepsakes, some stationery which indicates papa was making a try at business for himself. The heading is as follows:

W. J. RION  
CONFECTIONERY  
FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC FRUITS  
309 CHURCH STREET  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

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At another time he was employed by Mr. Charles Mitchell in the same kind of business.

But his life was to be a short one. After a spell of pneumonia in the winter of 1885-86, he contracted "consumption" (now known as tuberculosis) and on April 2, 1887, shortly before his thirtieth birthday, he passed on to his "great reward."

Although I do remember certain instances and circumstances which occurred toward the end of his life, it has been a very great satisfaction to me to have heard, all my life, from people who knew him well, only the highest praise for his life and character,-his lovable disposition, his thoughtfulness for the welfare and happiness of others and his devotion to his wife and children and to Grandma Henry, who lived with us.

(NOTE: Nancy Ann Jones, his mother and her family will be outlined in a separate section,- JONES. )

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THOMAS D. RION, my grandfather, was born near Halls Hill, Rutherford County, Tennessee, on April 8, 1831, the oldest son of FRANCIS P. RION and wife NANCY GAYLE BLACKSTOCK.

Thomas D. Rion was married to Nancy Ann Jones on January 5, 1854. They had three children, my father William James Rion, Edwin Thomas Rion and Fanny Rion who married Ed Phillips.

Thomas D. Rion spent his entire life on the farm and in associated activities such as buying, selling and trading in livestock.

During the War Between the States he served in the "conscript Cavalry of Tennessee. Volunteering seemed to be failing to produce sufficient recruits in the Confederate Army and grandpa Rion was assigned to this duty of Conscription of recruits.

He died in Murfreesboro, Tennessee on September 26, 1898. I remember him well. I would see him in Murfreesboro when I would be visiting there and he happened to come into town. Grandma Rion, his wife had died several years previously - on June 15, 1877. He had been a widower some twenty-one years.

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FRANCIS P. RION, usually called Frank, was my great-grandfather. He was the son of William Rion, Sr. and wife Gilley (surname unknown).

Francis P. Rion was born in Virginia in 1805 and was married on January 17, 1825, in Charlotte C. H., Virginia to Nancy Ann Gayle, widow of David Blackstock.

Francis had left home at an early age and evidently was employed on the large plantation of the widow Blackstock which she had inherited on the death of her husband David Blackstock. When Francis married Nancy Ann, -he was "Bound Over" to her under Bond. I have not been able to find the exact meaning of this term "Bound Over", but in this connection it was an official, legal document requiring a bondsman who was his brother, Joseph D. Rion. Being dated the same day as their marriage, indicates it had to do with that as witnessed as follows:

"KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:- that we,  
Francis Rion and Joseph D. Rion are held and  
firmly bound unto James Pleasants, Jr.  
Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, in  
the just and full sum of One Hundred and Fifty  
Dollars, to the use of the Commonwealth, to the

payment whereof, well and truly to be made, we bond ourselves, our heirs and jointly and severally, firmly by these presents.

Sealed with our seals and dated this 17th day of January 1825."

THE CONDITION OF THE ABOVE OBLIGATION IS SUCH:-  
"That, whereas, a marriage is to be solemnized between the above bound Francis Rion and Ann Blackstock, widow of David Blackstock, of this County; now, if there be no lawful cause to obstruct the same, then the above obligation to be void, otherwise to remain in full force and virtue."

FRANCIS RION (SEAL)  
JOSEPH D. RION (SEAL)

H. B. CHERMSIDE, CLERK  
CIRCUIT COURT, CHARLOTTE COUNTY  
VIRGINIA

Nancy Ann's father, Thomas Gayle had died just the year before, (1824) and she turned to Francis, nineteen years her junior, for comfort and solace.

In the Fall of 1825, the "Migration South" had started. The Virginia holdings having been disposed of, they came South, through North Carolina to Tennessee.

The emigration party was composed of Nancy Blackstock's sisters and their husbands, and other Rions.

Michael Rion stopped in North Carolina while some of his family moved on to South Carolina where there is today a town by the name of RION.

William Rion, Jr., moved on to Kentucky.

This huge party of kinfolks brought their livestock and a few family possessions with them to Rutherford County, Tennessee.

Just when they arrived is not known, but the first land purchase was made by Francis P. Rion (our ancestor) in 1830. It was on the East fork of Stones River near Halls Hill.

Francis P. Rion, born in Virginia in 1805, died in Rutherford County, Tennessee in 1878, buried in Floyd Cemetery north of Halls Hill, east of and across the road from the Enoch Jones Cemetery. Here also lies his wife, Nancy Gayle Blackstock, born 1787 in Gloucester County, Virginia and died in Rutherford County, Tennessee in 1875.

Francis P. Rion and Nancy Gayle Blackstock's home was built of logs, a two story structure among the beautiful cedars and the huge rocks on the banks of Stones River. (NOTE: I visited this home in its original condition, in 1904,- and again in 1939 after it had been remodeled,- then again in 1958 when I found a complete remodeling had taken place.)

Originally it was a commodious two story house, built of cedar logs and sealed inside with wide poplar boards all hand made. The design and workmanship of the original interior showed a finesse very unusual for those pioneer times.

The doors, I thought so unusual, I copied them exactly for my present home.

Also, I have in my rock garden, stones from the creek running through the front lot of this place - and one from the original stone chimney which was being torn down.

In one of the real estate transfers recorded, Francis P. Rion sold to Thomas D. (my grandfather) and J. R. Rion (his brother) land bounded by Stones River and by Stroops land near Halls Hill. Transaction made 1859 as recorded in Rutherford County Court records.

This tract of land sold to his two sons, adjoined the original place.

A large log house was on this land also. I visited this house in 1904 but when I returned in 1939 it had burned down. This house was the birthplace of my father, so I secured rocks for my garden from the stone found-

ation and a piece of the hearthstone.

From his sons, passed on down through their children, we have a description of our ancestor, Francis P. Rion. This described him as a typical "Virginia Gentleman Planter" and was a striking figure riding over the plantation on his fine mares, carrying his gold headed walking cane and wearing buckskin gloves. He was always well dressed. Bee-gum hat, clothes of fine material and shining boots. On his hip hung his revolver (a necessity in those pioneer days) but this was not in view, as he was never seen coatless in public. His shirt was ruffled up the front and he wore a "Shoo-fly tie" more commonly known as "Windsor."

Francis P. Rion had a large frame, weighing one hundred seventy-five pounds. He was very active all his life, but became "despondent, quarrelsome and contrary" after he lost all his property during the "War Between the States."

He bought and sold cattle, driving them to market in Nashville and sometimes along the Natchez Trace to Natchez or New Orleans. He used his sons as helpers, perhaps beginning the tradition followed by my grandfather who in turn had my father helping him.

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THOMAS GAYLE: - father of our great-grandmother, Nancy Ann Gayle Blackstock, was born in England, April 17, 1750 - died May 24, 1824. He was married in 1770 to Mary Goode. They had seven children, the sixth being Nancy Ann, born in 1780.

It is not known just when Thomas Gayle first came to America, but we do have the record that he did serve as a Lieutenant in the American Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

Filed in the Court of Charlotte County, Virginia on the 5th day of July 1824, was a very elaborate and extensive will, indicating he was a man of wealth and prestige.

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WILLIAM RION, Sr., the first Rion of whom we have any direct record, was born in Maryland in 1750. This fact has been established from the record of his enlistment in the American Continental Army. This record is as follows:

"A list of young men enrolled by Captain James Young, Lt. James Bond, Lt. John Smith and Ensign James Tool to compose one company in the "Flying Camp" August 1776."

William Rion enlisted in Baltimore, Maryland Company, July 5, 1776, age 26, - 5 ft. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches tall, black hair, fair complexion, weight 175 lbs. Born in Maryland 1750."

His wife was GILLEY - - - - RION. Her surname is not mentioned in any of the records. She is referred to in his will as "my wife Gilley Rion."

Sometime after the Revolutionary War was over, he moved to Charlotte County, Virginia, where he died in 1813.

William Sr. and Gilley Rion had five children, the second of which was our great-grandfather, Francis P. Rion.

William Rion, Sr. lived a long and useful life during those rough pioneer days. While we do not have the exact records, he was, undoubtedly, the son or grandson of one of the Huguenots who came to America during the early 1700's.

His body was laid to rest in a cemetery at Charlotte Court House, Virginia, in 1813.

Revolutionary Soldier, - plain citizen, - one of many pioneers, suffering hardships, working toward a free AMERICA which they could pass on down to their children, - US - that we may enjoy the benefit of their labor.

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It is interesting to note in "Historical Register of Virginians in the Revolution" by Gwathmey, that four (4) RION men are listed as serving from Virginia. These are: JOHN RION who served in the 8th Virginia Regiment, Continental Line; EDWARD RION (sometimes spelled Ryon) served with the 3rd and 4th Virginia Regiments, Continental Line; ANDREW RION and LASURIS RION are listed but for thier service records, only the War Department is given for reference.

I cannot place just where, if anywhere, these four men fit into our family connection, but I feel it is safe to assume there was a family connection and that these or their immediate forebears were among those migrating from France with the Huguenots. In France they were one family - one "clan." Most of them migrated to Virginia.

The military enlistment record of our direct ancestor William Rion, shows he was born in Maryland and later moved to Virginia. No records have been found to give the names of William Rion's forebears.

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#### HERALDIC DESCRIPTION OF RION

ARMS - Gules, three lions' heads or.

CREST - A griffin's head or.

Heraldry is defined as the art or science of blazoning or describing in appropriate technical terms coats of arms and other heraldic and armorial insignia. The system is of very ancient origin.

In its modern sense, however, the heraldic art dates from the time of the Crusades, and was reduced to its present perfect system by the French; and it was not until that period that the crest or cognizance was generally adopted. The crest is a device worn on top of the shield, usually placed on a wreath, and was borne by knights and other personages of rank, when clad in armor, to distinguish them in battle, and as a mark for their followers and supporters. At first these badges were worn on the helmet, to render them more plainly visible, or on the arm, but in later times were transferred to the shield or armor. Many families have preserved their mottoes, or watch-words, which usually represent some characteristic of the family, or sometimes the war cry of the clan. Others never adopted a motto, just as many never adopted a crest.

An erroneous idea is entertained by some that heraldic symbols denote an aristocratic or exclusive class and is undemocratic in its origin and permanency. On the contrary, these badges of distinction were the reward of personal merit, and could be secured by the humblest as well as the highest. They are today the testimonials and warrants of bravery, heroism, and meritorious deeds of our ancestors; and they appeal to the pride of the intelligent and enlightened descendants of these distinguished families today, as the valiant deeds and self-sacrificing acts of contemporary persons would to their posterity.

## JONES

When, on January 5, 1854, my grandfather Thomas D. Rion was married to Nancy Ann Jones, this family of her father, Enoch Hunt Jones, became a very vital connection which has, all along, been much appreciated and respected by me.

For some reason I cannot fully explain, this branch of our family has always held a particular interest and fascination for my imagination. Perhaps it is on account of the memorable visit I made in 1904 to the old original Jones homestead in Rutherford County, Tennessee. Although 108 years had elapsed at that time, since the house had been built, there were still living in the old home place, certain of the descendants of the Jones family, whose names I cannot remember, who seemed quite familiar with old family history as well as the material history of the old homestead.

I recall that they told me that the house was built about 1796, and this ties in very well with the date of the marriage of Ezra Jones and Margaret Hunt, March 15, 1796.

This was a wonderful old two story house, built of sturdy cedar logs, especially good workmanship for those pioneer days, when usually the tools were crude and cumbersome, consisting mostly of a chopping axe, a foot-adz, a saw, an auger and a frow for splitting boards. These, with a hoe, a plow point, some seeds of grain and vegetables for their first crop were the prime necessities for a pioneering venture.

I was shown how the original house looked before the logs were weather-boarded on the outside with wide poplar boards and painted white.

The house was "L" shaped with a wide, spacious veranda across the front and another wide porch inside the "L". Just a short distance from

this side porch, stood a most magnificent old white oak tree. It's branches extended over a diameter of more than a hundred feet. It was quite evident that this particular site was selected for building the house, due to the presence of that grand tree. There were a number of fine trees of oak, poplar, cedar and beech in the grove, but this massive oak was outstanding.

I was shown the old kitchen, much in its original form,- little changed from the days when all the cooking was done in the old fire place with its smoldering embers,- the large pot, swung from the crane, the dutchoven for baking,-these with a skillet, a frying pan and a wooden tray in which to mix meal for bread,- a pair of pot hooks and if they could afford it, a hand mill with which to grind corn.

I was shown the old log barns and other service houses (much in the old Virginia tradition) still in use at that time but showing their 108 years of hard use. Some of the old "slave quarters" were still standing.

As I walked about these surroundings I could not escape wondering with my imagination, back into those rough pioneer days with these ancestors, trying to picture in my own mind what it was like back there, settling in this new country the very year that the State of Tennessee was admitted to the Union,-no roads, hardly a trail, Indians continuing hostile, few if any neighbors, no stores from which to buy necessities. Everyone must be self-sustaining, self-reliant.

Hunting and fishing, with wild greens, berries and fruits helped in Summer and Fall, while hogs, if they were fortunate to have brought along a few, were feasting upon the abundance of acorns, beech and hickory nuts getting fat for that long looked-for day when it would be cold enough for "hog killing."

Within a few years when the country was a little more populated the homesteaders were served by pack-peddlers, walking through the country, from house to house with dress goods, linens, etc., then the traveling shoemaker, who would stay in the home until he had made shoes for every member of the family, and then go from house to house serving all alike.

Skins from cattle, deer and groundhogs were all tanned in the same trough, for leather for the shoes, harness etc.

On the wide planked floors of the house were beautiful, homespun hooked rugs, hand made from cloth scraps. The beds were immaculate in home woven coverlets, all seeming to me to be much as it was in those early days.

I was shown picture albums as well as other pictures and treasures and on the table, the family Bible. Almost everyone of the old pioneers carried with them as the one indispensable treasure, a Bible, as they were mostly religious folk, and in this they kept their family records. If the Biblical names of our three Jones ancestors, Ezekiel, Ezra, and Enoch have any significance, this must have been true with them.

Another most interesting feature they pointed out to me, was a stile or "horse block" built of rock, which they said Grandpa Ezra Jones had built for his bride, so she could easily mount her favorite saddle horse which he had given her for a wedding present. Later, (on my 1939 visit) the people then living on the place, gave me one of the stones from this stile and it is now a part of my rock garden at my Florida home.

NOTE: For the benefit of the younger generations who have never seen one, perhaps we should explain that a STILE is a short series of steps intended to be used in crossing over a fence without opening gates, and

in cases such as this one, where a lady could mount her saddle horse easily without having to pull up. The ladies of that day always wore long skirts, even in horse-back riding, and they always rode "side-saddle." It would have been disgraceful to have permitted her ankles to show, to say nothing of riding straddle a horse. This particular stile (or horse block) was built of field stones, with five or six small steps leading up to the large cap-stone about three feet off the ground.

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The earliest of our Jones ancestors of which we have any record, was Ezekiel Jones, who lived in Virginia, and is recorded in the "Historical Register of Virginians in the Revolution", as having served in the 13th Virginia Regiment,-Continental Line. No further information is available,

His son Ezra Jones was born on February 3, 1772 and on March 15, 1796 was married to Margaret Hunt, daughter of Enoch Hunt.

The records show that Ezra Jones moved to "North Carolina" with no record of his moving to "Tennessee". It is interesting here that this seeming discrepancy can perhaps be easily explained by the fact that there was no State of Tennessee prior to 1796, as it was not until that year that Tennessee was admitted to the Union, hence, it can be assumed that he could have moved directly to that spot in Rutherford County, for then "North Carolina" included all territory from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River, the same territory as now embraced by both States of Tennessee and North Carolina.

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On May 11, 1798, Ezra and Margaret Jones were presented with their first-born, a son whom they named Enoch Hunt Jones, who was to carry on the tradition of the pioneer spirit and to later serve his country in War and Peace.

Ezra Jones laid a wonderful foundation for those who were to follow him, and his son, Enoch Hunt Jones, (my great-grandfather) not only carries on, but added Stature and Dignity to life around him.

Excellent testimony to this fact is the existence of the Jones family Cemetery, which, when I first saw it in 1904 and later in 1939, was in excellent condition. It covered a piece of land, maybe a quarter of an acre. It is surrounded by a beautifully constructed stone wall about two feet thick and three to three and one-half feet tall, built of carefully selected field stones and capped with wide smoothly hewn stones. The masonry had every evidence of skilled craftsmanship of a later period, indicating that it was created in Enoch Jones time, rather than an earlier period. The entrance was guarded by carefully locked, wrought iron gates of artistic design, all a fitting tribute to the memory of loved ones.

The grave-stones inside were mute evidence that "someone cared." The stones ranged in size and pretense from modest small to medium sized slab markers to the larger and more pretentious, the whole, dominated by a tall gleaming white shaft, in the center, to the memory of Enoch Hunt Jones. All the stones are plainly marked and most of them bear considerable informative family history, making the task of a would-be genealogist (such as me) much easier.

Such strong evidence of family solidarity and stability is rarely found in Rural America.

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NANCY ANN JONES: Daughter of Enoch Hunt Jones and Eunice Macklin (McLinn) Jones, was born September 6, 1834 and was married to Thomas D. Rion (my grandfather) on January 5, 1854. She was the mother of three children, William James Rion (my father) the oldest, -Edwin Thomas Rion and Fanny Rion.

Grandma Rion died June 15, 1877 at the age of forty-three years. I have been told she was a frail little person, but bravely, and too much so, tried to carry on her household duties raising a family and administering to their needs. When she died, Papa was only twenty years old, - Uncle Ed was fifteen and Aunt Fanny about eleven or twelve.

I have heard mother and others tell of occasions when Papa would find his mother exhausted over some household chore such as cooking or washing, and would pick her up in his arms and carry her to her bed and return to finish the chore himself. In hearing others speak of my grandma Rion, it was always in the most endearing terms.

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ENOCH HUNT JONES: father of my Grandma Rion, was born May 11, 1798 near Hall's Hill, Rutherford County, Tennessee, son of Ezra Jones and Margaret Hunt Jones. He grew up on the plantation where he was born, but soon was to leave those familiar surroundings for service in the Armed Forces of the United States,- under General Andrew Jackson, against the British, at or near New Orleans - the War of 1812.

At the age of sixteen, he enlisted on September 28, 1814, Enoch H. JONES, Private, in Captain Richard Tate's Company VOLUNTEER MOUNTED GUNMEN.

"Col. Thomas Williamson,-Muster Roll of the Field and Staff Officers of Col. Thomas Williamson's Regiment of Tennessee Volunteer Mounted Gunmen in General John Coffee's Brigade, in the United States Service, under the command of Major General Andrew Jackson. Mustered on the 28th September 1814."

The above from records in Tennessee State Library and Archives, and continues,-

"Capt. Richard Tate,-28th September 1814 to 27th April 1815,-I certify on honor, that each non-commissioned officers, musicians, artificer and private of the Company under my command traveled eighty miles in marching from Nashville in Davidson County their place of residence to Fayetteville in Lincoln County where they were mustered into service."

The history which ties in with this service record is,-

"August 15th, 1814 - after signing a treaty with the Creek Indians, General Jackson went to Mobile and found the English menacing the Gulf Coast settlements."

It was shortly after this that the enlistment of Volunteers from Tennessee, including Enoch H. Jones, was called for, and joined the forces to the South.

"After capturing Pensacola from the Spanish,- Jackson moved on December 2, 1814, to New Orleans.

December 10th, British troops landed below New Orleans and advanced on that point.

December 23rd, Jackson attacked from two different positions.

January 1, 1815, British opened an offensive, and were reinforced January 6th."

By this time Jackson's forces had been gathered together,- "A motley array of sailors, regulars, creoles, pirates, negroes, Frenchmen, Kentuckians and Tennesseans." These held Jackson's left, in the battle which began early on the morning of January 8th and lasted until January 18th.

Even after several crushing defeats the British seemed loath to depart, and did not until February 11th. Thus ended the land fighting.

The job finished, our Soldier Enoch Jones returned to his home and was mustered out on April 27, 1815.

Later, Enoch Jones was to be honored as we shall relate later.

Pension records in the National Archives in Washington show that Enoch H. Jones received a war pension of \$8.00 per month.

About 1825, Enoch Hunt Jones was married to Eunice Macklin (or McLinn). They had five children, one of whom was my grandmother, Nancy Ann Jones Rion. Eunice Macklin died May 1, 1839.

Enoch Jones was married three additional times and while none of these wives relate to my family, I will mention them for the record.

His second wife was Rebecca F. Hunt (a cousin) whom he married about 1840. She died May 19, 1856.

The third wife was Caroline Hunt Ready, married about 1860. She died May 9, 1873.

The fourth wife was Oma McKnight and no dates are available.

Our research has disclosed an interesting document copied from Page 511 - Record of the United States Census of 1850, secured by Hilda Jones Dunn of Washington from the National Archives.

NOTE: This document contains the names of those of the family living in that house at that time, listed by name and age which apparently was guessed at as we find discrepancies. For example, Nancy is listed as eighteen. She was born in 1834, hence was actually sixteen. Enoch, himself, listed as sixty, while born in 1798, was fifty-two. Another error is in place of birth. They were all born in Tennessee,- only the ancestors were from Virginia. But the record is interesting. Also note, no slaves are listed.\*

\* There is a separate census record of slaves for the year 1850.



The Jones House now owned by  
Bill Lynch



<u>McCrackins District</u>	<u>County of Rutherford</u>	<u>State of Tennessee</u>
<u>Enumerated at Census of 1850</u>		<u>Date of August 26</u>
<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Born in</u>
Jones, Enoch	60	Virginia
Jones, Rebecca	40	Virginia
Jones, Sarah	21	Virginia
Jones, Nancy A.	18	Virginia
Jones, William	13	Virginia
Jones, Martha	12	Virginia
Jones, Gusham	10	Virginia
Jones, Fanny	8	Virginia

From the 1850 Census Records of Rutherford County, Tennessee.

In the National Archives, Washington, D. C.

In addition to the above copy of Census of 1850,- below we see the report of 1830, which is of an entirely different form, giving no names, only males or females according to age groups, and slaves only male or female.

<u>County of Rutherford</u>	<u>State of Tennessee</u>
<u>Enumerated at Census of 1830</u>	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>
Jones, Enoch H.	<u>Males</u> 1 under 5 1 - 30 to 40 3 Slaves
	<u>Females</u> 3 under 5 1 - 30 to 40 1 Slave

The special honor, mentioned earlier, came to Grandpa Enoch on May 20, 1880, when he was eighty-two years old, at which time he was selected to pull the cord unveiling the handsome bronze statue of General Andrew Jackson which had been erected on the State Capitol grounds at Nashville.

The Nashville Banner, afternoon newspaper of Nashville, often features stories of important historical events of the past and where possible, shows old photographs of the event.

Such a story was featured in the magazine section on May 19, 1939, headed "UNVEILING OLD HICKORY'S STATUE", and reprinting a photograph made on that occasion. Under the picture was the following story:

"The unveiling of the Clark Mills' equestrian statue of Gen. Andrew Jackson was a feature of the Nashville Centennial Exposition, April 23 - May 29, 1880. The unveiling was held on May 20. A crowd of 30,000 thronged Capitol Hill that day to witness the ceremonies. Among the military celebrities present were Gens. Joseph E. Johnston and Edmund Kirby Smith (CSA) and Gen. D. C. Buell, former commander of the Union Army of the Ohio. Dr. T. A. Atchison, exposition president, delivered a welcome address; John F. House delivered the oration of the day, and Enoch Jones, a veteran of Jackson's wars, pulled the cord unveiling the handsome bronze statue."

Just how or why Enoch Jones was selected for this honor is not revealed in any of the records. The Tennessee State Archives does contain a clipping from the "Nashville Republican Banner" of May 20, 1880 (the date of the unveiling) "UNCLE ENOCH JONES, an old Jackson soldier of Rutherford County, is in the city, as a guest of W. L. McKay, 387 S. Summer St."

It is known that he was often affectionately referred to as "uncle" Enoch Jones.

At the time of the erection of Clark Mills' magnificent bronze equestrian statue of General Jackson at Nashville, a total of three of these were cast, one to be erected at New Orleans, one at Washington, D. C. and this one at Nashville and it is with a lot of pride that we recall this honor to our ancestor.

A little less than five years later, Enoch Hunt Jones was laid to rest in the beautiful little cemetery on the hill, having "departed this life on February 2, 1885."

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#### SUPPLEMENT

##### JONES

Since transcribing the foregoing, relating to Enoch Hunt Jones, we have discovered that the original Family Bible of Enoch Jones is now in the possession of his grandson Ed Jone, son of Gursham Jones.

While the information about our part of the family, as contained in this Bible, differs very little from what we already have, it is more complete and is especially interesting and valuable because most of it is in Enoch Jones own handwriting.

I have never seen family birth records in such complete detail as to mention the time of day as well as the date. My grandmother, for instance,-" Nancy Ann Jones, born Saturday night, 6th of September, 1834 at the hour 11 o'clock."

Also note,-his entry on the death of his wife Eunice McLinn Jones,- "It is her gain tho a great loss to me," he wrote, tenderly, then initialed the entry "E. H. J".

Eunice McLinn Jones was the mother of nine children. She died at the early age of 35.

Any controversy regarding the correct spelling of her name McLinn, seems now to be resolved, as Enoch, in his own handwriting, wrote it,- "McLINN."

Entered here is the complete record as copied from the original Bible of Enoch Hunt Jones.

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## BIBLE

Daniel D. Smith's Stereotype Edition  
Stereotyped by E. White, New York  
Published and Sold by Daniel D. Smith, New York  
at  
The Franklin Juvenile Book and Stationary Store, No. 190  
Greenwich Street  
also by  
The Principal Booksellers in the United States  
1825

Bible of Enoch Hunt Jones ( 1798 - 1885 ) of  
Rutherford County, Tennessee

Bible now in the possession of E. L. Jones,  
Jefferson Pike, Route 3, Murfreesboro, Tennessee

## FAMILY RECORD

## MARRIAGES

Enoch Hunt Jones was born on the 11th day, May 1798.

Eunice McLin was born on the 15th day, December, 1804.

The above couple was joined in wedlock on Thursday evening, the 24th  
day, March, 1825.

E. H. Jones  
Eunice Jones

Eunice Jones, first wife of E. H. Jones, deceased this life on the  
1st day, May, 1839, in the morning. It is her gain tho a great loss  
to me.

E. H. J.

Married - E. H. Jones and Rebecca F. Hunt on the - - - - October 1839.

E. H. Jones and the yd. Caroline Hancock married the 22nd of November,  
1860.

E. H. Jones and Naomi (this word not clear) S. (or G.) McKnight the  
Yd of - - - - McKnight was married on the 8th day, October, 1873.

## BIRTHS

Margaret Catherine Jones was born on 22nd of March, 1826 it being on Tuesday.

Sary Elizabeth Jones was born on the 18th Aprile, 1827 - it being on Wednesday.

James E. Jones was born on Monday the 22nd day of December, 1828. Four o'clock in the evening.

Christiana Jane Jones born on Friday the 9th day of January, 1829.

Enoch Hunt Jones born on Monday the 12th day of September, 1831. Eight o'clock in the morning.

Josephas Alexander Jones was born Aprile 1st, 1833.

Nancy-ann Jones born Saturday night, 6th of September, 1834 at the hour 11 o'clock.

William Anderson Jones born Friday morning, 10 o'clock - August 12th, 1836.

Marthey B. Jones born Sunday Evening, 2 o'clock 4th or 8th (not clear) Aprile, 1838.

Gurshorn Hunt Jones born January 15th, 1841.

Fanny Green Jones born 12th October, 1843.

Fanny Green Jones, wife of Will T. McKnight, died on the 25th October, 1868.

## DEATHS

Rebecca F. Jones, the 2nd wife of E. H. Jones, died the 19th of May 1856.

Caroline Jones, 3rd wife of E. H. Jones, died the 9th of May, 1873. Age 73 years.

Naomi G. Jones, 4th wife, died Saturday morning 6-½ o'clock June the 17th, 1876.

Enoch Hunt Jones died February 3rd, 1885. Age 86 years, 8 months and 22 days.

\* Enoch Hunt Jones deceased this life on Friday the 2nd day of August, 1833, two o'clock in the evening, aged 22 months, 20 days, and 6 hours.

Margaret Catherine Hartwell departed this life on the 10th day of May, 1844.

James Ezra Jones departed this life on the 7th day of July, 1857 at 2 o'clock P. M. in the 29th year of his age.

Nancy Ann Rion, wife of T. D. Rion - daughter of E. H. Jones died Friday, the 15th, June, 1877 - 6 o'clock in the evening.

Christana Jane Jarmon, daughter of E. H. Jones. Died the 25th of May, 1882, 3 o'clock in the evening.

\* This must be "Junior."

NOTE: The abbreviation "yd" as used in the foregoing, seems to have been intended for "wd" abbreviation for widow.

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EUNICE McLINN (MACKLIN): First wife of Enoch Hunt Jones, was born on December 15, 1804, probably in the edge of Wilson County, Tennessee, adjoining Rutherford County.

NOTE: Records show that James B. McLinn, "sold his property in 1817 to James Black," -Property on Bradley Creek.

Eunice McLinn, or Macklin as the name is spelled both ways in different places, was the daughter of James B. McLinn. She is listed as

one of seven children mentioned in his Last Will and Testament, probated in Rutherford County, April 1820.

Eunice McLinn was married to Enoch Hunt Jones about 1825 (exact date not given.) She died on May 1, 1839. Among her several children were Nancy Ann, my grandmother Rion, and her favorite brother Will Jones as shown in the 1850 Census report.

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JAMES B. McLINN, or MACKLIN: The father of my great-grandmother Jones lived in Wilson County and later in Rutherford County as shown in early real estate transfers. We could not find any record of dates of birth, marriage or his death. The only clues to the period covered by his life are in his Last Will, probated in April 1820 listing his daughter Eunice seventh among his children, and she was born December 15, 1804. No records could be found of his wife's name or family history. She must have died prior to the writing of the Will of 1820 as she is not mentioned therein.

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EZRA JONES: Father of Enoch Hunt Jones, was born in North Carolina on February 3, 1772. He was married to Margaret Hunt on March 15, 1796. The records of the United States Census of 1830 should be of interest here -

Name	<u>State of Tennessee</u>	
	<u>County of Rutherford</u>	
	<u>Enumerated at Census of 1830</u>	
Jones, Ezra	Males 2 - 20 to 30 1 - 50 to 60  4 slaves	Females 1 - 15 to 20 1 - 20 to 30 1 - 50 to 60  4 slaves

MARGARET HUNT: Was born on October 18, 1773 and died May 22, 1877, a very long life, - 104 years. Margaret was the daughter of Enoch Hunt who married a - - - - Lorrance.

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ENOCH HUNT: It is not difficult to now see where great-grandfather Enoch Hunt Jones got his name. Enoch Hunt was married to - - - - Lorrance. (given name unknown.) They had ten children, seven sons and three daughters. No dates of birth, marriage or death are available on Enoch Hunt or his wife.

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EZEKIEL JONES: With no other records, we will be content with this ancestor's Revolutionary War record found in "Historical Register of Virginians in the Revolution" as having served in the 13th Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line.

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## HENRY

The name Henry has a Teutonic derivation meaning "Ruler of the home, - rich or mighty lord." This personal name imported by the Normans, was widely used by the English rulers. It was adopted as a surname in England and Scotland where most of the American emigrants originated, however, the name was not unknown in Ireland, Brittany and France.

The ancestry of the Henry family traces back to the 12th Century. Thus, the name is mentioned in the "Roll of Battle Abbey," the "Domesday Book" and in the "Great Rolls of the Pipes" in 1153.

The Henrys of Ireland are descendants of the Scots who were resettled in Ulster by James I. Religious persecutions of the Covenanters at a later period, followed by dispossession and eviction from their homes and in many instances resulting in large numbers leaving Ireland for America. The Henry family was well represented in this tide of emigration of these Scotch-Irish to America.

Early records indicate that several members of this family, after emigrating to America, settled in various parts of the country and established their own branch of the family.

Virginia was the new land chosen by the ancestors of our branch of the Henry family, for their new homes.

In the early 1730's, large grants of land in some of the Virginia counties made possible great estates being carved out of the wilderness. Smoke from an occasional settler's cabin also curled through the valleys and from mountain sides in portions hitherto little known.

Among these early 1730 settlers were two brothers, John Henry and his

brother, the Reverend Patrick Henry. They were from Aberdeen, Scotland. Their father was Alexander Henry who married Jean Robertson.

John Henry received his education at Kings College, Aberdeen, Scotland where he was an honor student.

After arriving in America, John Henry was married to Sarah Winston, and to this union, nine children were born, two sons and seven daughters. The youngest was a son born May 29, 1736, whom they named Patrick, doubtless for his Uncle, the Reverend Patrick Henry, Parson of Hanover.

Intellectually, and in all qualities that make for character, John Henry, the scholarly gentleman, undoubtedly brought to his son Patrick and to his other children, a superior heritage. This was augmented for Patrick by the influence of John's brother, the learned Rector of St. Pauls in Hanover County.

Although I am unable to establish the direct connection, it has always been my understanding, that our branch of the Henry family descended from this connection, in fact, directly so. Even though I have not been able to determine the exact status, nevertheless the very interesting studies I have made of the entire Virginia branch of the Henry family, increases my pride in being one of them.

As all genealogists must piece together their story from numerous bits of information, and sometimes very small bits, it has certainly been true in this instance.

A well known Eighteenth Century London editor, printer and writer, David Henry, a kinsman of the Henry's who settled in Virginia, had this said of him = "He had a well stored mind and in all his writings he never forgot the instructive moral." David Henry never left England, but in writing of his Henry kin who had emigrated to Virginia, he said,-"They were

more respected for their good sense and superior education than for their riches," and again, "At every neighboring gathering of the Gentlemen, they were described as among the foremost, of genteel style and at great pains to instruct their children."

In another instance, editor David Henry mentions that several of his relatives "sought their fortunes in Virginia where their name is held in high esteem."

In 1904, I talked with Uncle Wash Henry on this family connection, and made some notes, but unfortunately these were lost in the fire and my memory does not serve me sufficiently to recall many of the facts, but although in my recent studies and research, I am unable to trace the exact connection to Patrick Henry. I have found it most interesting and am still very proud to be a part of the family of "The Henrys of Virginia" and especially the Fount Henrys.

My interest was re-kindled a few years ago when I discovered a letter which had been written to my sister, January 24, 1927 by Col. William L. Crittenden, seeking family information for the completion of the Henry family history, which was however, never completed. Col. Crittenden's grandmother was Mary Catherine Henry, a sister of my grandfather Fountain Jeffries Henry and Uncle Wash Henry.

In his letter, Col. Crittenden states: "I imagine that you already know that your great-grandfather was Fountain Fisher Henry, Captain of Culpeper Minute Men (wife Sara Dudley Jeffries) your great-great-grandfather was Joel Henry (wife Sussana Allen) and your great-great-great-grandfather was George Henry."

"I have often visited the old Henry plantation 'Clover Creek' in Culpeper County and the town house at Culpeper Ct. H., which is an old brick

mansion and which was used as a hospital for Confederate wounded of the second Battle of Manassas."

With this bit of information, I have been successful in contacting a researcher in Culpeper and have developed some additional information, but far too little.

On the subject of the old Henry homes, Miss Browning, the researcher writes,- "I could not find anything about 'Clover Creek' the Henry plantation. The Fountain Fisher Henry home (town house) is on Main Street in the town of Culpeper,- Lafayette was entertained in this home."

Culpeper County, Virginia, the birthplace of my grandfather, Fountain Jeffries Henry and his father Fountain Fisher Henry,-has taken it's rightful place as one of Virginia's most historical spots.

It derives its name from Thomas, Lord Culpeper, who was Royal Governor of the Colony of Virginia from 1680 to 1683, in which position he was held in high esteem.

Lord Culpeper was one of the grantees of the territory of Virginia and at one time controlled all the land between the Rappahannock and the Patomac Rivers. Culpeper County, named in his honor, is only a small part of his extensive holdings.

Culpeper County Court House, as the little city of Culpeper was called in olden days, has been the scene of many notable historic events. George Washington took his oath of office at Culpeper as county surveyor in 1749.

What is now a peaceful and industrious country side has, in the past been the scene of bloodshed during both the Revolution and the War Between the States. Records show that thirty-seven battles and engagements took place upon Culpeper soil.

The Culpeper Minute Men were famed for their valor during the Revolutionary struggle.

The people met in Convention in Richmond July 17, 1775 at which time Patrick Henry made his Immortal speech. "Give Me Liberty, or Give Me Death." This Convention appointed a general committee of safety for the Colony and directed committees of safety to be chosen by the freeholders in each county.

The Convention also divided the Colony into districts in each of which a battalion of 500 men was to be raised and disciplined to march at a "minutes warning."

These were the Minute Men, of whom John Randolph said, "They were raised in a minute, marched in a minute and conquered in a minute."

During the Revolution, the Culpeper Minute Men were hunting shirts of strong brown linen and on the breast of each shirt was worked in large white letters the words - "Liberty or Death."

Their flag had in the center a rattlesnake coiled in the act to strike. Below it were the words "Don't tread on me!" At the sides "liberty or Death" and at the top "The Culpeper Minute Men."

The illustrious organization, though not continually active after the close of the Revolution, was re-activated at the outbreak of the War Between the States, and at sometime during this period, Fountain Fisher Henry served as Captain. In various records I have studied, including "Genealogies, Mostly Virginian" by Crittenden Narriott, a manuscript in the Rare Books Division of the Library of Congress, when the name of my great-grandfather is mentioned it usually carries the title,-ie - "Fountain Fisher Henry, Captain, Culpeper Minute Man." This organization will live in history and in the hearts of the people as long as the love of American Liberty survives.

In our immediate family history the Henry family connection is through my mother, NETTIE ELLEN HENRY.

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NETTIE ELLEN HENRY,—my mother, was born in Murfreesboro, Rutherford County, Tennessee, on September 6, 1860. She was the only daughter of Fountain Jeffries Henry and Sallie Ellen Osborn. Mother grew up in Murfreesboro, receiving most of her education at Soule College and later finishing her education at a college in McKenzie, Tennessee. The head master of this school was Uncle "Billy" Hendrix, and while there, mother lived with Aunt Jane and Uncle Billy, and roomed with their daughter Maggie Hendrix, her cousin, becoming very close companions.

At a party near Lascassas, she met William James Rion and on December 17, 1879, they were married in the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Murfreesboro, Rev. J. H. Warren officiating.

(More on this wedding on Page 7, in sketch on my father)

After marriage, mother and papa lived in the country near Lascassas but were back in Murfreesboro by the following Fall, and on November 24, 1880 my sister was born.

About two years after that, they moved to Nashville, where, on October 13, 1883, I was born.

Our father died on April 2, 1887, shortly before his thirtieth birthday, while mother was only twenty-six.

Before papa's death, during the latter part of his long illness, it became necessary for mother to go to work to help carry on the heavy burden, financial and otherwise.

Her first position was with the oldest and most historic store for ladies,—THOMPSON & KELLY. They handled principally, dress goods by the

bolt as this was before the day of "Ready to Wear" goods as we now know them.

Mother's health was not good. She was thin and frail and soon lost the battle of trying to lift the heavy bolts of woolens from shelf to counter and back, and had to give up this work with which she was physically unable to cope.

After papa's death, Mr. P. M. Hill offered her a place in his Millinery Store, in the "work room" making hats,-here she could be seated while at work. She loved this work for it was pleasant and easy and she soon became so adept at design and execution, she was transferred to the sales floor. It should be recalled at this point that with Millinery this also was before the days of "Ready to Wear." With the exception of a few Imported Paris Models, no ready made hats were on sale. Every hat was made especially for the lady customer, hence, her skill of delineation and design were highly valuable assets. She did well in the Millinery business, so much so that she remained in it until 1924, or a total of 37 years, during which she served many of the great ladies, of Nashville, as well as the near great.

Her life was one of real service.

On October 8, 1945 while taking an afternoon nap, her spirit quietly slipped away. She had only a few days before, passed her 85th birthday.

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FOUNTAIN JEFFRIES HENRY,- was born October 7, 1836 in Culpeper Ct. H., Virginia. He was the son of Fountain Fisher Henry and Sarah Dudley Jeffries of Culpeper, Virginia. He moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee, along with his brother Washington C. Henry and a sister, Nannie Henry (married J. H. Elliott).

There he met and married Sallie Ellen Osborn on May 19, 1859.

Grandfather Fountain Jeffries Henry, though christened "Fountain," was known as, and generally called "FOUNT", hence when I was named for him I was given the shortened name "FOUNT" and was never known by any other.

Grandfather Henry was a brick contractor, by trade, as was his brother Wash Henry. Many houses now stand in Murfreesboro and in Pulaski, Tennessee that were built just prior to, or immediately after the War Between the States, which interrupted his career, for as hostilities grew in magnitude, Fountain Jeffries Henry was among many prominent Murfreesboro men who in October 1862 were mustered into "COMPANY D, ELEVENTH TENNESSEE CAVALRY" of the Confederate Army, and served throughout the duration of the War, and at one time, received a gunshot wound in his hip, and later died from the effects of this wound.

From a newspaper clipping from the "Murfreesboro Free Press", I find the following:

COMPANY D, ELEVENTH  
TENNESSEE CAVALRY

"Following is a list of officer and men as they were mustered into the Confederate Army in October 1862."

Then a long list of approximately 125 names from well known Murfreesboro families, are listed among which appear the following,-two brothers and a brother-in-law,

FOUNT HENRY  
W. C. HENRY  
J. H. ELLIOTT

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Then in a letter from the Tennessee Board of Pension Examiners:

"This is to certify that Sallie E. Henry, the

widow of F. J. Henry, who belonged to Co. D.  
11th Tenn. Cav. was a pensioner of Tennessee."

"F. J. Henry's record as a Confederate Soldier  
was "A No. 1" and his daughter Mrs. Nettie E. Rice  
is clearly entitled to join the United Daughters  
of the Confederacy."

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This letter was signed by General John P. Hickman whom I knew in my  
younger years. He was a Veteran of the Confederate Army.

Many are the memories I cherish, of stories, told me by Grandma  
Henry, of those terrible times during that War as she was left alone with  
her two little babies, my mother then two years old and her little brother  
an infant in arms, and grandpa away and the uncertainty which hourly grew  
more unbearable as this terrible conflict raged around their very doors.

Fount Henry died in 1871 from the effects of the gunshot wound  
received a few years earlier, during the Civil War.

Grandma Henry (Sallie Ellen Osborn) will be further mentioned in the  
Osborn line.

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FOUNTAIN FISHER HENRY, was born in Culpeper County, Virginia, the son  
of Joal Henry and Susannah Allen. I have not been able to find any dates  
of birth, marriage or death, but from records and other evidence, Fountain  
Fisher Henry was a Virginia Gentleman of importance, especially in and  
around Culpeper Ct. H.

He was married to SARAH DUDLEY JEFFRIES, and they had seven children,  
as evidence by his Last Will and Testament, made on the 9th day of September  
1860. At that time no mention was made of his wife Sarah so it can be  
assumed that she had died before that time. Further evidence of this lies  
in a letter from Grandpa Henry to my grandma, written from Culpeper in

January of 1860. He had gone there for a visit with his father, who was ill. No mention is made of his mother. He described his train trip, which was very rough but only natural in those very early days of railroad pioneering.

It may be interesting to include here a copy of that letter, keeping in mind he had been married only eight months and he was only 23 years and 3 months old. Grandma was only 19 years, 5 months old.

Culpeper Ct. Ms.  
Jany. 24th, 1860

My dear Sallie:

I know you think it has been a long time since I left and I think so too, but it will not be very long before I will be back for I am very tired of staying here I can assure you. My Father is much better than he was when I got here. It seems to do the old man so much good for me to be here. About the first question he asked me was why I did not bring my wife, and I had to promise to come again and bring you before he would let me alone, but I showed him your picture and he was very much pleased with it and all of them think it is pretty. You know they are judges of beauty. Everything is so changed here that I hardly think it is home but I know just as many as I did when I left. Everybody that knows me says I have not changed a single bit since I left here but I think very different. I am going out in the country today to see my old Aunt and I reckon she will give me those pants, I was talking about. If she does not, I will always think she ought, don't you think so. When she heard I had come she came to town immediately to see me.

I did not tell you in my other letter (or note) how we got along with Florence, much better than I expected but I don't wish to have another trip of the same kind. We got here Saturday Evening at 6 o'clock, not as soon as I expected but had to stay all night in Chattanooga, which threw us back about 13 hours, but I can go back much faster than I came.

I am not going to tell you exactly when I will get there, for I might not get there exactly at that time and then you would be uneasy about me, but I will be there sooner than you think I will. I want to take you on surprise when I come.

Well Sallie you know I am not much of a hand to write letters so you must make out the best you can with this until I come, and then I will tell you all I know and a little more. I have declined going to Washington City as I would have to stay two days longer

than I intend to stay and I want to see my old sweetings too bad for that. If you have not written to me you need not write for I would not be here to get it. It takes a letter longer to come than it did me. I reckon I had better close my letter for you can hardly read this. It is so badly written. Give my best respects to all the family and believe me as ever,

Your affectionate Husband,

Fount

P. S. Take good care of the dog.

In the Will, - no mention is made of any specific properties to be divided among the seven children, nor any estimated values, but for the record we will copy the text of the Will here:

FOUNTAIN FISHER HENRY'S WILL

"I, Fountain F. Henry, of the County of Culpeper do make this my last Will and Testament hereby revoking all others heretofore made by me.

FIRST: I direct my executor, hereinafter named, to sell all my estate, real and personal, and out of the proceeds first to pay my debts and then to divide the residue into seven equal parts, one part I give to each of my following named children, - Susan C. Bell, Martha L. Cooper, Washington C. Henry, Ann G. Elliott and Fountain J. Henry; one seventh part I give to my son Washington C. Henry in trust for the sole and separate use of my daughter Mary Camiss, and the remaining seventh part, I give to Washington C. Henry in trust for my Grandson, Robert A. Collins, the interest, if necessary, to be expended in his education and support and the principal to be paid to him when he arrives at the age of twenty-one years.

SECOND: I appoint my friend, James W. Green, my executor.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 9th day of September 1860.

Fountain F. Henry (SEAL)

Signed, sealed, published and declared as the last Will and Testament of the testator in our presence at the same time, at the request of the testator in his presence and in the

presence of each other subscribed our names as witnesses thereto, the 9th day of September 1860.

JAMES W. GREEN  
JAMES G. FIELD  
THO. O. FLINT

Fountain Fisher Henry served as Captain of the "Culpeper Minute Men" - but no dates are available as to duration of this service, or the period of time engaged.

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SARAH DUDLEY JEFFRIES: Wife of Fountain Fisher Henry, was of a distinguished Virginia family. She was the daughter of Richard Jeffries and Ann Cannon Pollard. No dates are available except that Richard and Ann were married in 1796. Richard Jeffries was the son of Ambrose Jeffries and Rachel Dudley, Rachel being the daughter of Col. Peter Dudley, Revolutionary Soldier from King and Queen County, Virginia. This Jeffries information was secured from Miss Georgie Jeffries, age 93, of Culpeper, and is all that she could remember. She had no records.

Both the Jeffries and Dudley families were represented in the Revolutionary struggle and from the information we have secured, it is safe to assume they were held in high esteem, and especially so within the family as there are several namesakes including my grandfather Fountain JEFFRIES Henry and his mother Sarah DUDLEY Jeffries. Col. Crittenden's sister was named "Sarah Dudley Crittenden", and many others of the descendants bear their names.

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JOEL HENRY: Father of Fountain Fisher Henry was married to SUSANNAH ALLEN. While no dates are available it is probable they were married about 1790. It has been impossible to secure accurate information on either of

these great-great-grand parents but we can safely assume that Joel Henry was born in Culpeper County, Virginia, as we have ascertained that his father George Henry is listed as a soldier in the Revolutionary War from Culpeper County.

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GEORGE HENRY: No dates or other information has been developed on the personal or family side of George Henry, except that of his military record as listed in "Historical Register of Virginians In The Revolution." Also no mention is made anywhere of his wife's name or her family.

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I have understood all my life that we were descended from or very close to Patrick Henry, but I am unable at this time to establish this. There are several by the name of George Henry connected with the Patrick Henry family, but just which one, if any, is the correct connection seems destined to remain a secret from me, - after all, Patrick had seventeen children and sixty grand-children, and 200 years of genealogy is too large a task for me.

## OSBORN

It has been interesting to note what a prominent part Virginia has had in the background of the three previously mentioned branches of our family - Rion - Jones - Henry. While our first record of the Rions in America show that William Rion was born in Maryland and Thomas Gayle in England, the fulfilment of their lives was inseparably linked with Virginia.

With the Jones, we know nothing prior to their living in Virginia, and so, with the Henrys, except the John Henry family from Aberdeen, Scotland.

This is also, not only true with the Osborn branch, but we are happy to have this history in more detail, and dating back further than any of the others.

For this more accurate information, we are indebted to Howard E. Ronk of New York City, now deceased, whose mother was an Osborn and first cousin to my great-grandfather Harvey Osborn.

I recall distinctly, when I was a child - perhaps ten years old - this man and his wife visited at our home for a week or two, on a very extended trip, all over the United States gathering facts, - names - dates - etc. on all branches of the Osborn family, making a close study and compiling those facts with a view that someday a volume might be published so that all of the numerous members of that family might have one - but unfortunately, that proved too costly a venture and the idea discarded, but the manuscripts have proved invaluable many times.

To further identify this man with the family I would like to relate here, a story that intrigued me in my early years. I had heard that my great-great-great-grandfather, Caleb Osborn, had two sons, and that one of

these sons had nine daughters and no sons and the other had nine sons and no daughters.

One day while I was visiting in New York and discussing Osborn family with Cousin Howard, I asked him if that could be true. He answered promptly that it was perfectly true - but it was not all the story, - and he proceeded to tell me there were THREE sons, instead of just two, and one had nine sons, one had nine daughters, and the other one had nine children - boys and girls.

Then he explained our mutual kinship by telling me, - his mother was one of the nine daughters and my great-grandfather was one of the nine sons.

It was a real satisfaction to me to have been able to visit with him several times before he died, and to listen to him tell of the historic facts connected with the family.

I wish I knew now, where that manuscript could be found. I would like so much to see it.

I recall that he told me of the first Osborn in America, one Thomas Osborn, born in England and came to America about 1609, landing at Jamestown with some of the early English settlers. This was just two years after the first settlers landed there. We have no further record of his movements for the next seven years, - or until 1616 - when the records show he settled in Chesterfield "Colony", Virginia, in November of that year. (This is probably the Chesterfield County of modern day Virginia and I assume it was near this section where he settled.)

We have no record of his marriage, nor his wife's name, only my hazy recollection that Howard told me she was a Roseberry from England.

In 1631, Thomas Osborn was made a JUSTICE, - and in 1639 he became a member of the HOUSE OF BURGESSES - of the Colony of Virginia.

The record seems to be blank from this time until his GRANDSON, THOMAS, appears in the record. No mention is made of his son, however his grandson Thomas and his great-grandson John, with their families, remained in Virginia, - but the great-great-grandson of the original Thomas, left Virginia and moved north to New Jersey. His name was also Thomas and wife Jane Patterson.

Their son CALEB OSBORN, born at Lyon's Farm, New Jersey on February 24, 1751, was to have a distinguished career in the Revolutionary War and to meet his death on December 20, 1799 in a most unusually tragic manner.

Caleb Osborn was a close friend of George Washington and served with him throughout the Revolutionary War, was with him through that terrible winter at Valley Forge, therefore, it was not unlikely that when General Washington died, Caleb Osborn would be asked to serve as one of a guard of honor. This group were riding horseback in the funeral procession and necessarily on strange horses. Returning from the interment, Caleb's horse became frightened and threw him onto a picket fence, fatally wounding him, and causing his death on December 20, 1799.

The records do not show when, before the Revolutionary War or afterward, but this Osborn Ancestor moved to New York City and had a home on the lower tip of Manhattan, facing the "Battery." About 1920 this house was pointed out to me by Howard Ronk, and at that time was the only residential building left on that busy street. All others had been crowded out by large business structures.

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Johnathan Osborn, second oldest son of Caleb Osborn, was born at Newark on July 31, 1793, - was married to Hannah Spinning of Elizabethtown,

October 23, 1814. They moved to Oxford, North Carolina where he died February 26, 1877.

This Johnathan Osborn was the one of three brothers who had nine sons, the oldest of which was Harvey Osborn, my great-grandfather who was born August 31, 1815. He moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee where he married Ann Campbell Reed on October 8, 1839. Their oldest child was Sallie Ellen Osborn, my grandmother, who was born August 8, 1840.

Just as I owe much to Howard Ronk for this earlier history of the Osborn family, I am equally indebted to my grandmother for my knowledge of the Osborns, - from her father and mother on down. Also I am indebted to her for stimulating in me, a greater respect for and desire to know more about all my family connections.

More members of the Osborn side of my family remained in Murfreesboro longer than any others and as I visited there regularly each Summer it was only natural that I knew more of the older folk and enjoyed the many stories of the old pioneer days.

There has been handed down through several generations of Ellen's, a priceless bedspread. Exquisite in design and workmanship, completely hand woven and hand embroidered. I have been in the Garden where it was that Grandma Reed with her own hands, planted the seed, hoed and cultivated the plants, picked the cotton, spun it on her own spinning-wheel, wove the fabric on her own loom, embroidered and tufted it, heavily, in a most artistic design, and deeply fringed the edges. It is a genuine work of art, a priceless tribute to the versatility and ingenuity of this pioneer woman.

This was my great-great-grandmother Eleanor Rankin Reed, born July 11, 1800 and died August 24, 1884. Grandma Reed was definitely the favorite of my mother and my grandmother. She was a very wise woman and her counsel and advice were sought by many in the family.

The several generations of Ellens to which I referred, began with, so far as I know, the maker of the bedspread:

ELENOR (ELLEN) RANKIN REED	1800 - 1884
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on down through:

ANN CAMPBELL REED OSBORN	1817 - 1864
SALLIE ELLEN OSBORN HENRY	1840 - 1916
NETTIE ELLEN HENRY RION	1860 - 1945
ELLEN ANN RION CALDWELL	1880 - 1964
ELLEN RION CALDWELL FLEMING	1906 *

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It was Ann Campbell Reed who married my great-grandfather Harvey Osborn, and these were the parents of my grandma, Sallie Ellen Osborn who married, Fountain Jeffries Henry.

During the Civil War, the suffering and distress of the Southern people was not brought about by the shooting alone, but by the many contributing factors such as privation, even starvation,- disease and pestilence. Around Murfreesboro, the dread scourge of small pox took its toll.

One day during this siege, a man knocked on the door of Grandpa Harvey Osborn's home. He had with him, three of the younger sons (Grandma Henry's brothers.) Their father and mother were told that the boys had been discovered "catching a ride" on the rear of a large farm wagon going cross town, and what they did not know was that the wagon was carrying corpse, several of them died from small pox. All of the boys clothes were to be burned outside and they washed with alcohol on entering the house. This precaution however, did not prevent the boys from contracting the disease, but the precautions did help prevent serious cases and the boys recovered.

But while they were sick, their father became ill with the same disease and due to the good nursing care of the mother, he too, recovered, but through all this nursing, Grandma Osborn was stricken in a most serious manner, and from this terrible disease, died on December 3, 1863.

Grandma Henry was living in her own home when she heard that the three brothers had gotten caught in this trouble, so in an effort to rescue her baby brother, Uncle Joe Osborn, who was then only three years old, she went to her father's home, remaining on the outside, taking every possible precaution (for she had two little ones of her own at home, my mother three and Uncle Tommy one.)

The baby brother was up stairs, had had no contact with the sick brothers, so they stripped him of all clothes, bathed him thoroughly with whiskey (it was serving as sterile alcohol) and lowered him in a sheet to Grandma, who took him with her and cared for him for several years.

A few years after that, grandfather Harvey Osborn married again and his second wife then assumed the job of raising Uncle Joe. The family of older children were not too happy about this second marriage as they did not consider her socially equal to their father.

Many, many times during my summer vacations in Murfreesboro, I rode out to the little farm, about a mile outside the city limits to visit this,-the only "Grandma Osborn" I had really known, and to me, a little boy, she was just a dear, sweet little old "grandma" who seemed to love me very much and appreciate my visits.

She, too, knew many interesting stories about the family.

Her husband, Grandpa Harvey Osborn, had died there in Murfreesboro on February 24, 1886. I was hardly three years old and, of course, never knew him.

One of my mother's most cherished memories of Grandpa Harvey Osborn was an occasion soon after papa and mother were married. They went to see Grandpa, and he was expressing his congratulations and good wishes. Mother described the scene with Grandpa sitting in front of a wood fire, in the large open fire place - rocking leisurely in his favorite chair, a large wooden rocker with cane seat and back and wide flat armrests, all well cushioned for increased comfort.

Never changing his gaze from the blue and yellow flames, flickering among the glowing embers, he said, - "Nettie, I want to give you some advice if you will heed, your marriage will be a success,- always keep two bears in your house,- "bear, and forbear."

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Now to list the direct line of the Osborn family in reverse of their chronological order:

SALLIE ELLEN OSBORN: my grandma Henry, was born in Murfreesboro, Tennessee on August 8, 1840. Her entire childhood, in fact the first 42 years of her life were spent in Murfreesboro.

She received her entire education at Murfreesboro Female Institute, and at Soule College. I have some of her "report cards" which indicate she was an excellent student.

Her younger days were spent in comparative ease as her father, though not considered a rich man, was within the category of "well-to-do."

During her early years she was interested in the many inventions and developments of world importance which were taking place. The sewing machine, the cotton gin, the electric light, the telephone, the steamboat and the steam railroad. She had told me of the thrill she had on seeing the first steam railroad train go through Murfreesboro. She was a child of about

eight years. News had spread about town that at an announced time, this marvelous new invention would pass through town. Just about the entire population turned out to share in this great event. Many prominent citizens of Murfreesboro had become stockholders in the new Nashville & Chattanooga Railway, hence the interest at this point on the line was very great.

On May 19, 1859, just three months before her 19th birthday, she was married to Fountain Jeffries Henry.

To this union were born two children, my mother and her brother, two years younger.

As related in the sketch on Grandpa Henry, the War Between the States which began in 1861, grew in intensity and in 1862 Grandpa enlisted on the Confederate side.

Some of the fiercest battles of the War were fought in and around Murfreesboro, notably the Battle of Stone's River, just one mile north of the town, near the railroad.

It was on December 26, 1862, - Grandpa had been in the army about two months, when Confederate commander, General Bragg began the concentration of his forces on Stone's River. On December 29 the engagement began. A see-sawing of advantages between the two opposing forces ensued during the following few days, until on January 3, 1863, General Bragg retreated toward Tullahoma, and on January 5, the Union Army moved in to occupy Murfreesboro.

This brought on much hardship and suffering to the women and children, left defenseless, and many times I have heard Grandma try to describe the terrible feeling of "emptiness" in the whole town. All the younger and able-bodied men in the army, and no way to get any word of their plight. Rifle fire and the booming of cannon which had gone on for days, had hushed, but in its place now the beat of soldier's feet - YANKEE - soldiers.

Grandma's home at that time, was a comfortable little brick cottage located diagonally across the street from Soule College. They had a large brick underground cistern filled with rainwater, their only source of water other than the "Town-pump" as no public waterworks existed at that time.

When the Yankees moved into town, the first thing they did was to take over Soule College for a hospital for their wounded, then immediately plundered the neighborhood, stripping all homes of their food supplies, all clothing and linens for beds and bandages, even the baby clothes, and carried water from the cistern until it was empty.

At this time, mother was nearly two and a half years old, and her brother Tommie only a few months.

Grandma told pathetically of her desolation as she stood on the porch, helpless, holding the baby in her arms, and mother, by the hand as she watched everything in the world she owned being carried away. But the even greater burden on her heart was the fate of her husband. What had happened to him? The fighting had been fierce, the Yankee losses had been heavy both in killed and wounded. It was only to be assumed, as they had heard that the Confederate losses had been even greater. The uncertainty was terrible.

Wearily and desolately, she turned away and with the two babies, walked the few blocks to Main Street and to her father's home where she remained for a good while.

The War was over in 1865, and with Grandpa home, it was hoped that peace would soon be a reality, but - not so. Troubles of a different kind, and in some respects, worse than War, if that were possible.

Riff-raff moved in, from the north, and with corrupt men in high places, these, so called, "Carpet Baggers" continued to harass and persecute the

southerners. Some of the negroes became arrogant and offensive, and to help curb this condition, the original secret organization, the KU-KLUX CLAN was organized.

Not to have been able to bring under control the arrogance and vindictiveness of those half-savage negroes of those post-slave days would have been unthinkable. What laws that existed for such protection were not being enforced by the Northern politicians who were placed over the conquered Southerners.

The negro of that time was inherently and mortally afraid of "ghosts" or "hants" as they called them,-so it was to take full advantage of this emotion that the best of the southern men banded themselves together in this secret society and dressed in white robes and white head-dress, and the negroes, seeing large bands of these white robed figures (HANTS) riding in on horseback, were more rigidly held in check.

Only occasionally did the Clansmen find it necessary to catch a particularly arrogant one and give him a good flogging. News of such occasions spread rapidly among the negroes and struck terror to their souls.

This unbearable condition was eventually brought under control.

Grandma told me of many instances during this hectic period. The women, at home, made the white robes and masks, yet did not know who would be wearing them. It was so secret that wives and mothers did not know that their own husbands and sons were involved. Of course, they suspected such, but accurate knowledge was kept secret from them.

That magnificent motion picture - "The Birth of a Nation" truly depicted life during this period of reconstruction, and although Grandma was not interested in many moving pictures, she, evidently was awaiting the showing of this one,- for after she died, we found in her purse newspaper notices of the approaching dates, but she died before that time.

On July 1, 1871, her beloved husband, - "MY FOUNT" (as she always called him) passed on to the "Great Beyond," his death attributed to the effects of a gunshot wound in his hip, received during the War.

The family was living in a small one story, frame cottage on Main Street, and after grandpa's death, she remained there until Uncle Tommie went to Nashville to work and mother was married.

Alone, grandma worked at dress-making to make a living for her two children. It was a brave struggle, but struggle it was, until Uncle Tommie got to the place where he could help.

By 1882, Grandma, Uncle Tommie, papa, mother and sister were all settled in Nashville, then in 1883, I was born. Then in 1885, tragedy struck again, her beloved Tommie was stricken and died suddenly. From that time on to her death, her life was lived solely for my mother, my sister and for me.

On March 10, 1916, her beautiful Spirit passed from her frail body.

Her 76 years had truly been years of self-sacrifice, and during her last ten years, she had done much to make her great-granddaughters happy.

The little children, as they naturally would, began asking questions about Grandma, - "Where is my Grandma?" "When will Grandma come back?"

We tried to explain that God had taken Grandma to His home in Heaven where she would be with the Angels.

Evelyn, then just two and one-half, expressed the true feelings of all of us, as she looked up and exclaimed, "Oh! won't the Angels enjoy my Grandma!"

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HARVEY OSBORN: my great-grandfather was the oldest of nine sons born to Jonathan Osborn and Hannah Spinning at Elizabethtown, New Jersey on August 31, 1815. The family moved to Oxford, North Carolina where Harvey grew up, but when a young man, he moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee where he met and

married Ann Campbell Reed. This marriage took place in Murfreesboro on October 8, 1839. They had seven (7) children,- two girls and five boys. My Grandma Henry was the oldest of these. Her sister, Mary, was the mother of Cousin Annie May Cook Spain, whom we all called "Mammie", so nick-named by our little girls. The brothers were Will, James, Robert, Harvey and Joe.

A great deal of the history of Harvey Osborn, Sr. has already been covered in the sketch on Grandma Henry, hence it is not necessary to repeat it here.

Harvey Osborn died at Murfreesboro on February 24, 1886, and is buried in Evergreen Cemetery.

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ANN CAMPBELL REED: my great-grandmother Osborn was the daughter of James Reed and Elenor Rankin. She was born in Murfreesboro (a Christmas gift) on December 25, 1817.

This one, in the Century long list of births in the direct line, is the only one which is not on exactly the 20th year. This has always been an interesting coincidence, for as far back as we have record,-

Grandma Rankin was born in	1780
Grandma Reed was born in	1800
Grandma Osborn was born in	1817
Grandma Henry was born in	1840
My mother was born in	1860
My sister was born in	1880

As related previously, grandma Osborn died on December 3, 1863, during the Civil War, after nursing three of her young sons and then her husband through a horrible siege of small pox.

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JAMES REED: my great-great-grandfather, was born June 27, 1793. He was married to Elenor Rankin about 1816 or early 1817. We do not have any detailed information about this ancestor, however, I do remember that in my childhood days, I was impressed, from hearing the older folks talk, that

"Grandpa and Grandma Reed" were held in the very highest esteem by family and friends alike. He died on April 29, 1865 and is buried in the Reed-Osborn plot in Evergreen Cemetery in Murfreesboro.

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ELENOR RANKIN: was born on July 11, 1800. Was married to James Reed about 1816-1817. She lived a long and useful life and died August 24, 1884.

Among our large family connection, Grandma Reed was always and in all ways, my mother's favorite. I have heard mother tell of many instances where she would go to "Grandma Reed" for counsel and advice.

Elenor Rankin Reed was, of course, the daughter of Grandpa and Grandma Rankin, but I regret I do not have any information on either of them except that Grandma Rankin was born in 1780. This I recall in connection with the direct line of mostly Ellons, born at twenty year intervals beginning with "Grandma Rankin in 1780."

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JONATHAN OSBORN: was born at Newark, New Jersey on July 31, 1793. Jonathan's grandfather, Thomas Osborn, was born in Virginia, but in his early young manhood, left home and went north, settling in New Jersey.

Johnathan was married to HANNAH SPINNING of Elizabethtown, New Jersey, on October 23, 1814. She was born March 25, 1793,- and died January 12, 1863 in Oxford, North Carolina, where the family had moved during previous years.

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CALEB OSBORN,- father of Johnathan Osborn, was born February 24, 1751, at Lyons Farm, New Jersey. He was married on June 3, 1781, to SUSANNAH JEWELL. These were my great-great-great-grandparents.

It was this Calbe Osborn who served with George Washington during the Revolutionary War,-was with him through that terrible Winter at Valley

Forge,- and who died on December 20, 1799, from effects of being thrown from a horse returning from Washington's burial.

His wife, Susannah Jewell, was born in June 1762, and died April 29, 1803.

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THOMAS OSBORN: was the father of Caleb Osborn, and it was he who left the home in Virginia to live in New Jersey. He was married to JANE PATTERSON. We do not have any dates on either of these.

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JOHN OSBORN: the father of the Thomas Osborn just mentioned, is also the son of a Thomas Osborn. John Osborn was born about 1680. There are three Thomas Osborns within five generations, and we know little about any of them, except the first. The wife of John Osborn was Ann. All other information is lacking.

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THOMAS OSBORN, whose wife was Martha, was the grandson and namesake of the first Thomas Osborn and we have no further information about them, however, we assume this Thomas Osborn was born about 1650, in Virginia.

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UNKNOWN, the records as furnished show a generation here, but with all names and dates unknown, however, we can assume that this Osborn, the first in our line to be born in America, was born about 1620 to 1625. At this very early date, there were probably few, if any, private family records kept.

There are no public service data recorded, as is in the case of his father, the original Thomas Osborn.

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THOMAS OSBORN: This, our original ancestor in America, was born in England in the late 1500's, and emigrated to America among the very early settlers at Jamestown. His name is not listed among the "First Settlers" who landed in 1607, but the Ronk records indicated he arrived about two years later, or 1609.

In 1616, he set out from the Jamestown settlement and went up the James River a few miles and settled in Chesterfield "Colony." We can assume that this "Colony" was what is now, in whole or in part, Chesterfield County. This section lies South and West of Richmond.

Thomas Osborn was not long in taking a prominent part in the life of his community. This was not an easy thing to do in the face of the dangers of those pioneer times, to say nothing of those hostile Indians in that vicinity, which was near the home grounds of the once famous and powerful Indian Chief, Pehwhatan, father of Pocohontas.

However, in 1631, Thomas Osborn was made a Justice.

Then in 1639 he was made a member of the House of Burgess, the governing body of the Colony of Virginia.

We have no records concerning his wife, only my memory that Howard Ronk told me he married a Roseberry from England.

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OSBORN  
CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

1. Thomas Osborn  
Unknown
2. Not Recorded  
Unknown
3. Thomas Osborn  
Martha
4. John Osborn  
Ann

5. Thomas Osborn  
Jane Patterson
6. Caleb Osborn  
Susannah Jewell
7. Johnathan Osborn  
Hannah Spinning
8. Harvey Osborn  
Ann Campbell Reed
9. Sallie Ellen Osborn  
Fountain Jeffries Henry
10. Nettie Ellen Henry  
William James Rion
- 11.

Ellen Ann Rion - Fount Henry Rion

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## ADDENDA

In pursuing my desire to learn more about those who have, in the recent centuries, done so much,-braved such insurmountable difficulties,- suffered so many defeats and achieved so many triumphs, that I - and so many others might have more of life, liberty and happiness, - I have found a deeper sense of appreciation and a greater desire to honor those who have left to us this heritage, for to do so is a part of the greatness of living.

I sincerely hope that my feeble efforts in securing and compiling these few facts about those of our blood who lived through the perils of pioneering days, of Wars and pestilence, yet, have enjoyed much of peace and contentment,-will engender in the hearts of those who read this, a deeper sense of reverence and appreciation for them.

They have written in the book of life. Some of the pages are beautifully soiled with the sweat of toil, some are pure white and many are written in the blood of the Revolution, but all are honorable and plain to see.

Today, each of us is a writer, each day we turn a new page in the book titled "This is My Life." All preceding pages are closed with the fall of yesterday,-tomorrow is not yet ready for recording.

Each morning there lies before us a clean page on which to record our deeds of today.

May we now be builders for tomorrow, even as our forbears, that those who follow us may have a richness of life not now foreseen, filled with spiritual strength in service to those who follow us, for,-"To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die."

THE ROLE OF STONE'S RIVER IN THE  
EARLY EXPLORATION, TRADE, AND SETTLEMENT  
OF RUTHERFORD COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Samuel J. Lawson III

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## PREFACE

When one examines a contemporary map of Rutherford County, it will come to his attention that there are two prominent features on the face of the county, i.e., Interstate Highway 24 and Stone's River. Both the highway and the river have many things in common. Today in 1981, the highway is a route both to the market and from market for many goods leaving and entering Rutherford County. Besides being a route for trade and commerce, Interstate Highway 24 also serves as a major transportation route for people travelling through the area. Obviously, the movement of people and trade goods through the county means an increase in the area's economic well-being. The benefits of Interstate Highway 24 are well known to the residents of today's Rutherford County.

Years ago, the traffic of people and commerce into and out of the Rutherford County area came via Stone's River. The river served in much the same capacity as Interstate 24 does today. The river supplied a "Natural Highway" by which the county's produce was sent to market and by which commercial items were brought into the county. The river traffic of those days also brought an economic prosperity along with new settlers.

People coming into the area were from different ethnic backgrounds and thus contributed many cultural treasures to the area's heritage. Following the course of the river, many Rutherford County settlers found new homesteads along its banks. Thus the river greatly influenced the pattern of settlement in the county. These various pioneer settlers had different needs which directly effected the supply and demand for goods as well as

the types of goods transported over the Stone's River trade route.

As Interstate Highway 24 provides today's area residents with both transportation and trade connections to the remainder of the United States, Stone's River also gave earlier Rutherford Countians outside connections. The Stone's River flows into the Cumberland River which in turn flows into the Ohio River, thus giving access to the Mississippi River. This gave river traffic connections to the great trade centers of New Orleans, Natchez, Vicksburg, Memphis, Cairo, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Wheeling, and Pittsburgh. Thus the benefits of the navigation of Stone's River were well known to the people of Rutherford County in previous times.

It becomes evident that the Stone's River afforded Rutherford County with a portion of the great Mississippi River tradition of river life and transportation. This is a notable aspect of the area's history which has previously been either forgotten or ignored.

The following account of the river's role in the early exploration, trade and settlement of Rutherford County is presented with the hope that present-day residents may begin to understand the past greatness of Stone's River and its importance to the county.

#### DESCRIPTION

The Stone's River is a prominent tributary of the Cumberland River and has a drainage of 924 square miles. The West Fork and the Middle Fork are in Rutherford County in their entirety. The East Fork originates in a large mineral spring near Woodbury in Cannon County, flows across the northern half of Rutherford County, and joins the West Fork after the latter has received the waters of the Middle Fork. The Main Channel, formed by the union of the East and West Forks, continues a general northwestward course through the remainder of Rutherford County to enter Davidson County. The river continues its northwestward drainage, passing through Donelson, and empties into the Cumberland River near Neely's Bend. The distance from the mouth of Stone's River to its East Fork origin in Cannon County is approximately 82 miles if measured along the meanders, however the distance straight across the land from mouth to origin is only 44 miles. Thus it is easily seen that the river is filled with bends and meanders. The actual meander length for the Main Channel is 38.6 miles, East Fork 46 miles, and West Fork 25 miles.<sup>1</sup>

The point at which the East Fork and the West Fork join became the site of the town of Jefferson, the first county seat of Rutherford County. Jefferson's location at the forks of the Stone's River resulted in the later development of the town as a river port. Just one mile downstream from Old Jefferson was Jefferson Springs, a popular summer resort of the 1920's era.<sup>2</sup>

A brief look at a county map reveals that the Walter Hill community is located on the East Fork about 5 miles east of the site of Jefferson. It can also be seen that 9 miles further upstream is Bradley's Creek, on the

banks of which is located the village of Lascassas. The village is adjacent to the river. Even further upstream is the village of Readyville which is located at the juncture of the East Fork and the Rutherford/Cannon County line. Murfreesboro is the only town of considerable size on the river and is located about 15 miles by river from Jefferson up the West Fork. The famous Civil War battle of 31 December 1862 and 2 January 1863, centered around the river on the northwestern edge of Murfreesboro. However the greatest feature that the map shows along the course of the river is the Percy Priest Reservoir. This man-made lake was created in 1966 by the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The river was impounded by a dam located 6.8 miles from the mouth of the river adjacent to the old Stewart's Ferry bridge and formed a 42 mile long reservoir when the waters were backed up.<sup>3</sup> The lake today is extensively used by local residents for boating, fishing, swimming, camping and other forms of recreation.



Figure 1: Map of the Stone's River  
drainage area

#### EARLY EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT

Stone's River first appears in written history about 1674 when French explorers who penetrated the interior of Tennessee from the Illinois country, encountered the Shawnee Indians. The Shawnee at that time were located along the Cumberland River with a large settlement near present-day Nashville. Stone's River was within the hunting grounds of the Shawnee. These hunting grounds were the object of great controversy among the Indians. They were coveted by both the Chickasaw and the Cherokee. The matter came to a violent conclusion in 1714. About 1710, a French trader, Jean du Charleville, from Crozat's colony at New Orleans, established a store or trading post "on a mound on the west side of the Cumberland River, near French Lick, in the Shawnee country," near the present site of Nashville. As a result of the hunting controversy, in 1714 Charleville and a party of Shawnee were attacked and killed by a band of Chickasaw. During the ensuing conflict, the combined force of the Chickasaw and Cherokee forced the Shawnee to retreat north of the Ohio River and vacate the Central Basin of Tennessee.<sup>4</sup>

The early French explorers referred to the Cumberland Basin area of Tennessee as the land of the "Chacuanon" River. Translated this meant "Shawnee River" which is known today as the Cumberland. The French were also the first permanent settlers of European origin in the Middle Tennessee area. Martin Chartier, a deserter from the LaSalle expedition on the Mississippi River, married a Shawnee woman and subsequently settled with her people at their settlement at French Lick (present-day Nashville) and resided there about 3 years. Between 1692 and 1694, a group of the Piqua

Shawnee moved eastward into Pennsylvania to join others that had previously removed there from the western areas and Chartier accompanied these Piqua Shawnee. Later, he returned with his son, Peter, and settled again at French Lick. Perhaps it was due to the influence of Chartier that French traders had worked and hunted in the Cumberland Basin since about 1685.<sup>5</sup>

The next Frenchman to settle in the Nashville area was only the vanguard for an influx of explorers that came into the area in the late 1760's. Jacques-Timothe DeMontbrun, a French Canadian fur trader, began to operate in the Nashville area during the mid-1760's. DeMontbrun came to Tennessee from Kaskaskia, Illinois and eventually brought his wife and settled in a cave on the Cumberland River near the mouth of Mill Creek in present-day Davidson County. Records show that DeMontbrun used the "natural highway" of the area in his trading. He ascended the rivers of the area many times and used "a large boat" with 6 or 8 hands and thus hunted and trapped for many years in the region about Nashville.<sup>6</sup> It is highly probable that he used the Stone's River as an access to the rich hunting in the Rutherford County area.

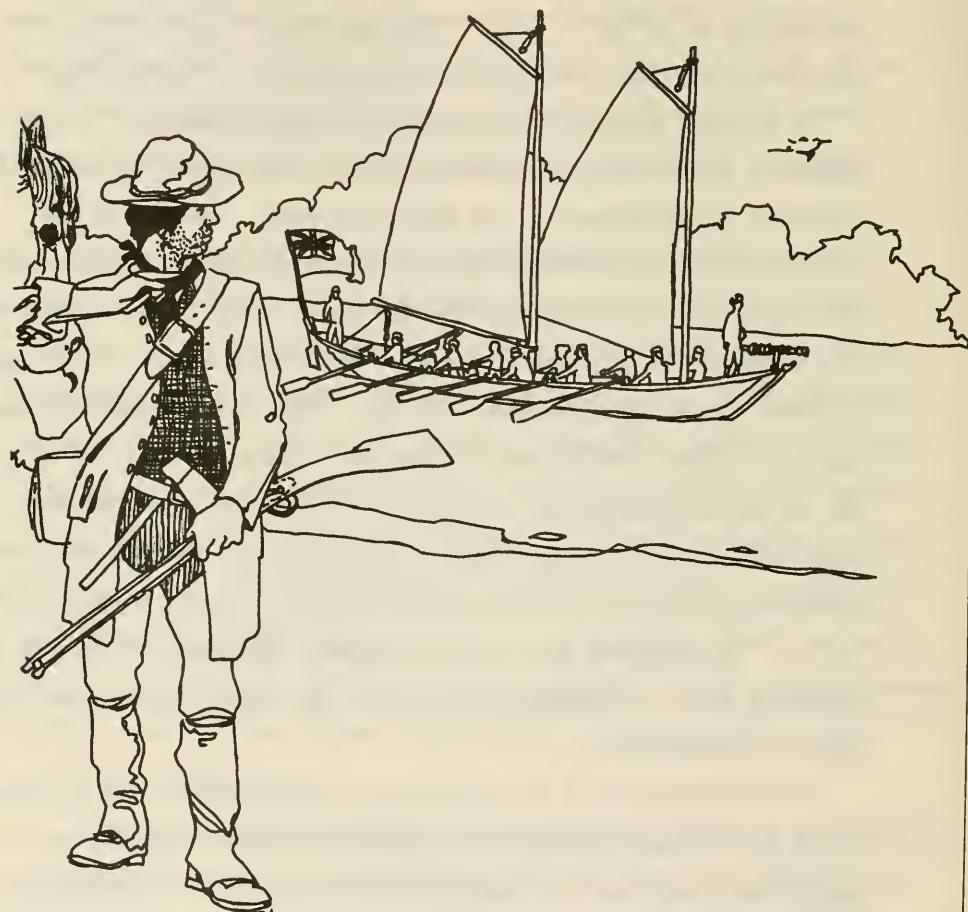
Shortly after DeMonbrun's arrival in the area, parties of long hunters from Virginia crossed the Appalachian Mountains and began to explore and hunt in Tennessee and Kentucky. One such group was headed by Colonel James Smith. Among the men that accompanied Smith was a man named Uriah Stone. When the party had reached the Cumberland Basin, the hunters separated to hunt and explore. The year was 1766, when Uriah Stone discovered a blue-green stream emptying into the Cumberland River. He followed the stream

southward to a point where it divided into two rivers, one fork to the east and one to the west. After re-joining Colonel Smith's party, Stone told them of the river and thus the hunters called it "Stone's River".<sup>7</sup>

A few years later, in 1768, Lieutenant Thomas Hutchins of the Royal Engineers, British Army, was commissioned by his government to survey the topography and hydrography of the western frontier. Included in his survey area was the Cumberland Basin of Tennessee. Hutchins accomplished his mission in part through the construction of a boat which was to be used as a transport for the engineer surveying party. The result was the Gage, an "armed galley" which was converted from a bateau at Kaskaskia, Illinois. Hutchins' "gunboat" had 24 oars and carried a crew of 35 men. In 1769, at the conclusion of his survey work along the Cumberland River, Hutchins' group scouted out the lower reaches of Stone's River. The results of the expedition, in the form of descriptions and maps, were published in London in 1777. The published map, based on Hutchins' information designated the Cumberland River as "Shawnee River", after the Shawnee Indians, and Stone's River as "Fish Creek".<sup>8</sup>

The Stone's River in the 1760's was a different river than it is now. It may have flooded occasionally in seasons of extreme rainfall, but it appears that the river had a uniform flow because the soil was deep and covered with grass and forests all along the river's meanders and tributaries. The water is thought to have been deep and swarming with fish.<sup>9</sup>

Uriah Stone returned to the area in 1770 with a group of 10 long hunters including Kasper Mansker. At the end of their hunting in Middle Tennessee, the hunters met on the Cumberland River, near the mouth of Stone's River,



*Bill Drath*

Figure 2: Drawing of a Colonial British Scouting Vessel similar to that used by Lt. Hutchins

and built two boats and two trapping canoes. These were loaded with furs and bear meat. The group found a deserted boat which they added to their "flotilla" and later moved down the Cumberland River. They planned to go to Natchez to dispose of the goods and purchase much needed supplies. All went well until they reached the mouth of the Cumberland. When the group stopped in order to render some spoiling meat into oil, they were overtaken by a mountain man, John Brown, and 25 of his followers who promptly robbed Stone's party of 2 guns, some ammunition, salt and tobacco.<sup>10</sup>

The years 1768-1769 saw the birth of commercial transportation on the rivers of Middle Tennessee in the area of the Central Basin. Joseph Hollingsworth was employed by a trading house in Philadelphia to come to the Cumberland Territory and supervise the killing of game and the packing of meat in casks for the New Orleans market and the garrison at Fort Chartres, Illinois. Hollingshead's hired hands worked an area of 300 miles along the Cumberland River and employed 20 pirogues to transport goods.<sup>11</sup> No doubt this enterprise exploited the Stone's River area.

Early use of canoes and pirogues had been made by the Indians of the region. The Shawnee were famed for fine canoes. These canoes were actually "dug-outs" made from single logs. The Caribbean Indians called them "piraguas"; a term adopted by the Spanish and later by the French and English as the "pirogue". Using the Indian method of construction, a 20-foot pirogue would require 4 days to make. Indian war parties at times used pirogues which held over 20 warriors. The largest of this type craft were approximately 50 feet long and 5 feet wide and could carry 30 men or an estimated 50 tons of cargo. These large pirogues were steered with an oar at the stern and

propelled with either poles or paddles. The craft also could be "compartmentalized" for cargo when small bulwarks, made during construction, divided the hull into spaces 4 to 6 feet long. This is the same craft that was adopted and used by the early English and French fur traders. Pirogues were used for rapid transport of salt to settlers and transport of cargo to trading posts.<sup>12</sup>

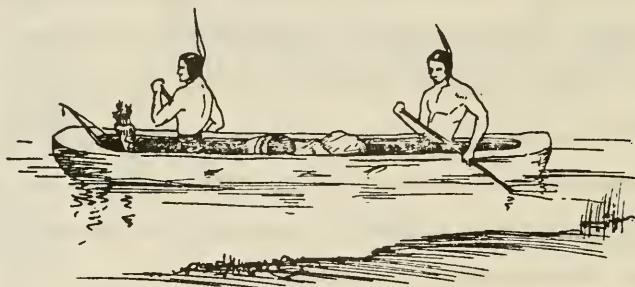


Figure 3: Pirogue

Jacob Sandusky, a Pole, took a cargo of skins and tallow down the Cumberland River to New Orleans in 1774. He is credited as being the first white man to make such a voyage.<sup>13</sup> He probably was indeed the first man to establish a new pattern for the exportation of products from the Cumberland Basin by showing the relative ease of following the downstream current of the rivers to the New Orleans market, rather than hauling goods overland. DeMontbrun also carried hides and tallow to New Orleans by boat in 1776.<sup>14</sup>

Sandusky's route to the New Orleans market was to become "standard operating procedure" for the exporters of the Cumberland Basin for many years to come.

A few years after Sandusky's voyage, Rufus Putnam arrived with a party of settlers at Marietta, Ohio. Putnam's landing was not significant for navigation as his cruise was. Putnam travelled in the galley Adventure. This vessel was 47 feet long, 12 feet wide with a curved, raking bow and the lines of a coasting boat. Such a craft was not unusual, but quite similar to the vessels used by the military and was patterned after a "ship's boat" or shallop. A shallop is described as a "shoal-draft keel vessel having a bluff bow and a square stern" with dimensions similar to those of Putnam's Adventure.<sup>15</sup> Although this instance was not out of the ordinary, it was a shadow of what was to come. The shallop-type vessel was of course a keel vessel which made it markedly different from craft that had been used previously. It's most outstanding characteristics are its stability and streamlined design. The Indian pirogue was a much more primitive craft. The French bateau was more like the shallop/keel vessel but did have several major differences. This kind of craft was a keel-less, flat-bottomed boat with ends tapering to points, built of planks. Small vessels of this type were called skiffs. The bateau was propelled by oars, setting poles, or square sails and was steered by means of either an oar or a rudder. 18 or 20 rowers were employed to man the crew. The vessels were often equipped with an awning or wooden shelter for a cabin in the rear. The halcyon days of the bateau were between 1754 and 1790. Bateaux built during the American Revolutionary War were described as 40 feet long, 9 feet wide, and 32 inches

deep.<sup>16</sup> Both the bateaux and the keel-type vessels were to become fore-runners of later river craft.

1779 and 1780 saw the plans and schemes of James Robertson and John Donelson begin to take shape and be put into action. These men were the motivators behind the Cumberland Settlements in Tennessee and became the "founding fathers" of the settlements. Reams of material has been written concerning this because of its great impact on Middle Tennessee, but this colonization project also had a tremendous effect on navigation and Stone's River in particular.

The expedition to settle the Cumberland River area around the old French Lick in today's Davidson County had direct bearing on the settlement of Rutherford County. The caravan of settlers came by two different routes with Robertson leading one group overland through Kentucky from the Watauga settlements of East Tennessee, and Donelson setting out from Fort Patrick Henry on the Holston River. Donelson was to lead a flotilla of over 40 flatboats loaded with settlers down the Holston River to the Tennessee past present-day Chattanooga into Alabama over Muscle Shoals back into Tennessee then into Kentucky to the mouth of the Tennessee River on the Ohio River. From this point, the flotilla was to travel upstream to the mouth of the Cumberland and thus up that stream to the bluff near French Lick at present-day Nashville.<sup>17</sup>

The Donelson voyage marked the introduction of 2 new ideas. First, the mass transport of settlers by water transportation. This was something that had not been tried before, but nevertheless seemed to set the style because later many western settlers began to travel by water when this means

of transport was available. Second, due to his success, Donelson ushered in the era of the flatboat, when it became the major vehicle of river transportation. But in a much more direct way, Donelson was to influence what was to happen on the Stone's River when he later would be personally involved in the settling of pioneers along its banks.

Flatboats, like those used by Donelson, were in use on the western rivers as a means of transportation by 1780 and no doubt sooner. The craft retained its importance in transportation until its use peaked in 1846-1847. Thereafter the use of flatboats declined until the American Civil War put an end to its use.<sup>18</sup>

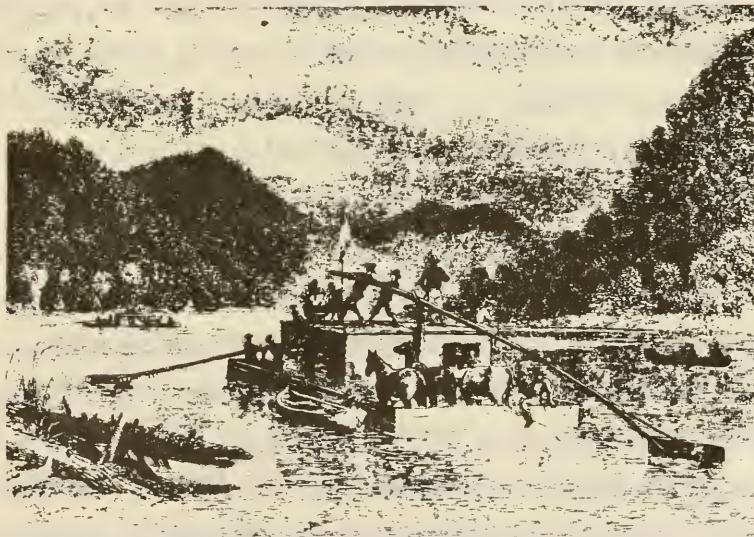


Figure 4: Family Flatboat

A typical flatboat could be described as a simple affair looking like a flat-bottomed box with a shed-like shelter built over the interior cargo space for the protection of either the cargo or the passengers and crew. Flats used by the government in the 1790's were 12 to 14 feet wide and 45 to 50 feet long on the average, although the sizes of flats in general were varied. Burdens varied according to size, with the average flatboat holding between 40 and 50 tons of cargo. The steering aboard a flat was done via a 30 to 40-foot oar that was pivoted in a forked stick to the roof or to a porthole in the stern. Two or more sweeps similarly pivoted on the sides were used to keep the boat in the current. The boat's crew demanded 2 men and a steersman.<sup>19</sup>

The flatboat was essentially a downstream craft and was generally floated downstream to the desired destination and upon arrival was broken up. After being broken up, the timber thus attained was then used for other construction purposes or sold for a profit by the boat owner. The average flatboat used by a settler's family was 30 to 40 feet long. When the cost was calculated, the flatboat could have been relatively expensive for a pioneer. Estimates place the cost between \$1.00 and \$1.25 per foot, thus with cable,  
<sup>20</sup> pump, etc., the vessel could cost approximately \$50.00 total.

In 1780, John Donelson's flotilla landed at Cedar Bluff near the French Lick and met Robertson's settlers to begin the task of settling the area of present-day Nashville. Tradition tells that "Timothy" DeMontbrun paddled down the river in his canoe to greet the new residents. However, Donelson made only a short stop at the Bluff, staying just a few days without unloading his flatboat, the Adventure. After seeing the pioneers were safely

arrived and getting along well, Donelson and his family boarded the Adventure and set out upon the Cumberland River pushing her against the current. Upstream they came to the mouth of Stone's River. Upon reaching this point, the vessel was pushed up the Stone's River about 4 miles and landed on May 1st, 1780 in a large meadow of white clover. The site became known as "Clover Bottom", the name it still carries today. Donelson's group built cabins and planted crops of corn and cotton. By 1783, the settlement became known as "Stone's River" or "Donelson's Station."<sup>21</sup> The river's history had entered into a period of pioneer settlement.

At this same time in 1783, the State of North Carolina began the surveying of the lands that were to be given in grants to the soldiers for their service during the American Revolutionary War. These surveys included the Stone's River drainage area. In 1786, North Carolina issued these land grants and some of these such as the grants to Samuel Wilson, Hardy Murfree and Archibald Lytle were located deep within the area now known as Rutherford County. Due to troubles with the Indian tribes of the area during the 1780's and 1790's, it is thought that most Rutherford County pioneers made no permanent settlements in the county until about 1795.<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, Donelson's settlement at Clover Bottom evidently began a movement to settle the banks of the Stone's River and its tributaries. William Stewart of Fife-Shire, Scotland, had arrived in Middle Tennessee with Donelson's flotilla. In 1784, Stewart came to Stone's River and settled on the eastern bank near the site of the later built bridge on Stewart's Ferry Road about 7 miles upstream from the mouth of the river. By the spring of 1788, about 23 miles further upstream according to the deed records of

Davidson County, in which portions of today's Rutherford County were located, John Bowen and Robert Spotswood Russell apparently had residences along Stewart's Creek, a tributary of the Stone's River.<sup>23</sup> This area of Rutherford County has been referred to as a fertile area and probably played a large part in the production of produce to be sent to market. Statistics show that in 1788, the settlers of Kentucky and Tennessee sent \$225,000 of produce down the rivers to New Orleans. Sandusky's earlier voyage to the New Orleans markets had not been in vain. When the Mississippi River was opened "free" to American trade by a treaty between Spain and the United States in 1792, commerce with New Orleans markets rapidly increased.<sup>24</sup>

During the first two decades of the Cumberland Settlements, goods had been imported by wagon from the East. These goods were purchased in Philadelphia or Baltimore and brought over the Appalachian Mountains on pack horses. Wagons were sometimes used. However at an early date, the wagons were hauled from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, where they were transferred to flatboats and floated down the Ohio River to the Cumberland River thence to the Nashville area. This early import trade used overland transportation although the export trade of Middle Tennessee was from the beginning almost exclusively a water-borne commerce.<sup>25</sup>

Settlers were moving into the area of present-day Rutherford County by 1795. Samuel Wilson resided temporarily at the forks of the Stone's River in 1788-1789. During this time he planted Rutherford's first corn crop. Wilson later erected a permanent settlement at Wilson's Shoals on the Stone's River near the National Cemetery about 1½ miles up the West Fork

from his first residence. Wilson and Nimrod Menifee settled this area about 1797. About the same time, settlers were constructing their homesteads on Stewart's Creek. This party of pioneers included Owen Edwards, Thomas Nelson, William Atkinson, Thomas Howell and John Etta. Over on the East Fork, Thomas Rucker was locating his home near today's Veterans Administration Hospital. By 1799, William Lytle set up his abode on the West Fork in present-day Murfreesboro.<sup>26</sup>

The significance of these pioneers' movements and settlement patterns is that they are bound up with Stone's River. Carlton Sims summed up the situation by saying that "the most important stream of immigrants into the county (Rutherford) came up Stone's River from Davidson County."<sup>27</sup> Some of these moved up the East Fork, while others moved up the West Fork. The majority seemed to have followed the West Fork, erecting homesteads on Stewart's Creek, Overall Creek and Lytle Creek. By following the river's course and the dates of settlement, one can easily see the pattern of development in Rutherford County's early history. Beginning with Donelson at Clover Bottom in 1780 to Stewart in 1784, three miles further upstream and on to Wilson at the forks of the river in 1788, the settlements reached 38 miles upriver in about 8 years. After another 10 years, they reached to Murfreesboro on the West Fork and to Lascassas and beyond on the East Fork, so that by 1800, Readyville was being established.<sup>28</sup>

1800 was a year of change in the river history of our area. The hunting era on the frontier was gradually being replaced by the agricultural era with the increase in the number of pioneers raising crops. Cotton was the major export product of the Cumberland Basin with tobacco taking second place.

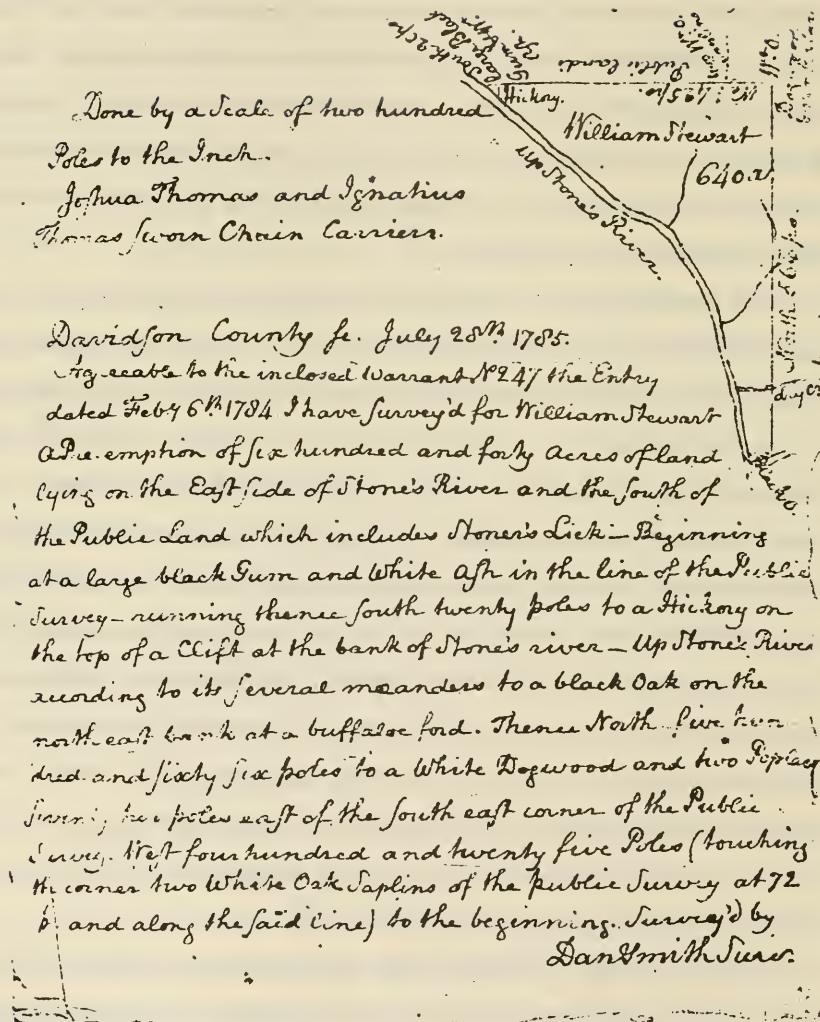


Figure 5: Survey map of the 1784 grant  
of William Stewart on Stone's  
River

Trade and commerce were becoming more water-borne. The Mississippi River had been opened for commerce and the freight rate for wagon transportation was at \$10 per 100 pounds. The rate for water transport was \$.75 per 100 pounds of goods. Practical business sense dictated a turn from land transport to water transport for trade. The Cumberland Basin area was exporting the "productions of the country" by boat downriver to New Orleans and was receiving goods from Philadelphia via Pittsburgh and the rivers. Flatboatmen would upon their arrival at New Orleans sell the cargo as well as the boat and would then return home along the Natchez Trace.<sup>29</sup> However, the most significant development was the introduction of a river craft called a "keel-boat".

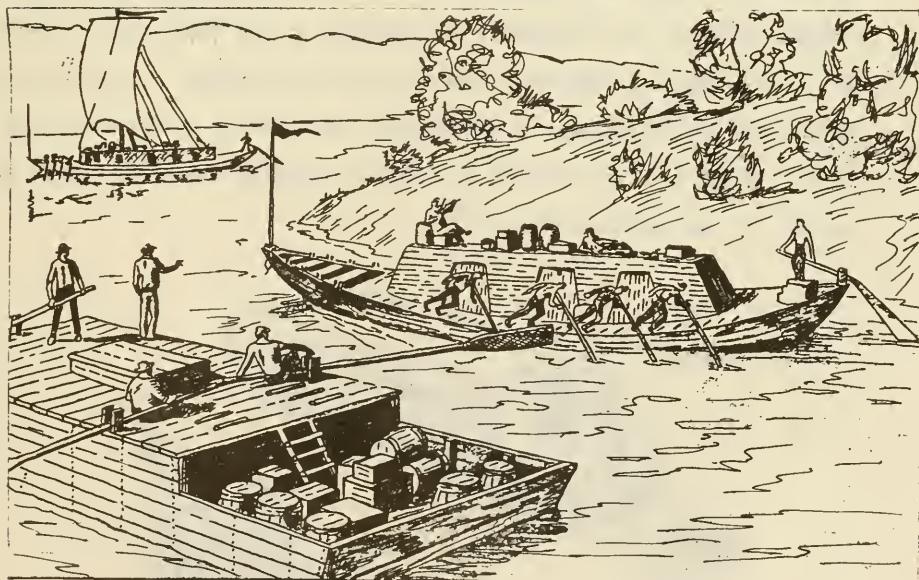


Figure 6: River Scene Showing  
A Flatboat and Two Keelboats

The keel-boat seems to have developed as a combination of the military galley or shallop-type vessel and French bateau. These vessels were created in order to both ascend and descend rivers due to their stream-lined configuration. The ordinary keel-boat was between 40 and 80 feet long, 7 to 10 feet wide with a shallow keel and was sharp at both ends. The vessel's loaded draft was about 2 feet, rendering it well adapted for use in shallow river water. The mid-section of the boat was usually covered in part by a cabin or cargo box that had an inside clearance of about 6 feet. All around the gunwales ran a cleated footway, 12 to 18 inches wide, where the crew walked while poling the boat upstream. At the bow were seats for rowers used when the boat was propelled by 4 to 12 oarsmen. The steering was done by means of a long oar pivoted at the stern and extending 10 to 12 feet beyond the boat. This "rudder" was operated by the steersman, who was usually the boat's captain, sometimes called the boat's patroon. The burden of the keel-boats ranged between 15 and 50 tons, but usually it was less than 30 tons. If the boat was covered by a cabin extending the total length of the vessel, it was called a "barge".<sup>30</sup>

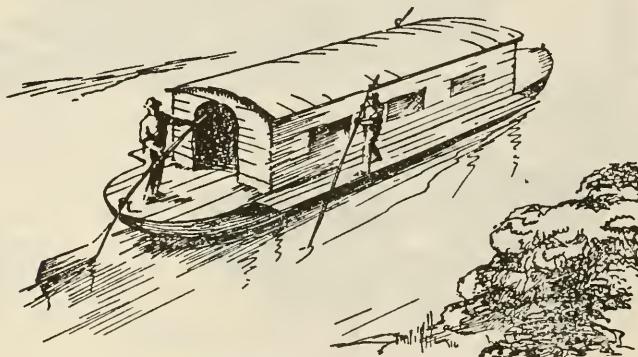


Figure 7: Barge

In June of 1809, the Nashville newspapers announced the arrival of a typical keelboat/barge in the following manner. "Arrived at this place (Nashville) on Saturday last, the elegant barge Mary Anne, Capt. Sprigg, 27 days from New Orleans, burthen 57 tons. This barge is 87 feet long and upwards of 15 feet wide...Built at Cincinnati at a cost of \$1100...is now completely equipped with masts, Spars, and rigging, and is an excellent sailer. She is worked by 22 hands...amount of freight was upwards of \$5000."<sup>31</sup> Not only were keelboats propelled by setting poles and oars but when conditions were favorable and the situation warranted, sails were employed.

The Tennessee Legislature, on 13 November 1801, declared Stone's River to be navigable "to the main West fork" of the river and thus the river was protected by the law for navigation. This act began a new phase in the history of the river.<sup>32</sup>

## COMMERCIAL NAVIGATION

Once Stone's River was declared navigable, many individuals quickly grasped the chance to get ahead in this new business of water-borne commerce. One of Nashville's enterprising merchants, John Coffee, got into the business as early as 1803. Coffee owned several barges and keelboats which he employed in the New Orleans trade. The names of two of these, the Resolution and the Adventure, have been preserved. However, the earliest record of Coffee's involvement is found in his personal papers. The record consists of the bill of lading of the boat Child which is dated 2 March 1801. The destination of the Child was New Orleans and her cargo included salt-petre, pork, corn, cotton, tobacco and slaves.<sup>33</sup> Goods brought up to the Cumberland Basin from New Orleans consisted of those things not easily obtained locally such as sugar, coffee, and various groceries.<sup>34</sup>

John Coffee was later to do business on the Stone's River, but local residents had already begun, starting almost immediately after the river had been declared navigable. It soon became evident that the chief port on the river was to be Jefferson. This was mainly due to the town's advantageous location at the forks of the river. About this time a local interest was started at Jefferson in the way of freighting the commerce of the community to New Orleans by way of Stone's River and the Cumberland, which awakened an interest in the community for river travel. Many people envisioned the Stone's River as becoming an important artery of commerce. Then in 1803, Moses Ridley and John Buchanan asked permit of the State to build a mill dam on the river about 10 miles downstream from Jefferson. The leading citizens of Jefferson held a public meeting and dispatched a resolution

of protest to the General Assembly:

"That if our Honorable, the Senate and House of Representatives, do not think it expedient to secure to us the navigation of Stones river, according to a former law, and in opposition to certain petitions to legalize obstructions in the navigation of said river, we will be forced, again to think our rights infringed, and our interests disregarded. Wherefore, your memorialists respectfully pray, that your honorable body will take into consideration our peculiarly critical situation, and by rejecting all petitions to obstruct the navigation of Stones river to the town of Jefferson."

The State allowed the construction of the mill dam, but required that the builders install navigation locks to facilitate the safe passage for all vessels. The locks were specified to be at least 67 feet long and 16 feet wide. Ridley and Buchanan built both the dam and the lock at a location on the Stone's River that is now located under the waters of Percy Priest Lake. The site was later known as Jones' Mill and was approximately 28 miles from the mouth of the river.<sup>35</sup>

Just as with any settlement that developed along the rivers of Middle Tennessee, Jefferson began to send an increasing number of boats down Stone's River to eventually reach New Orleans. William Nash owned a trade-store in Jefferson about 1803. Nash's store sold dry goods, groceries, gunpowder and lead as well as whiskey. Nash was at this time exporting ox-hides, wolf-scalps, deer skins, deer "saddles", 'coon skins as well as farm produce, grain and meat to New Orleans via flatboat. These boats took a month or more to complete the journey. Goods coming into Jefferson were purchased largely in Pittsburgh and brought to Jefferson by river. Nash was not the only pioneer making use of the river's "natural highway". The Tennessee

General Assembly received a petition on 26 August 1803 requesting that the navigation of Stone's River be kept open from Cummins Mill to the mouth of the river in order to carry produce to market.<sup>36</sup> Cummins Mill was located on the East Fork near Providence Church in today's Walter Hill community.<sup>37</sup> 1803 also saw the creation of Rutherford County on the 25th of October.<sup>38</sup>

By this time, John Coffee, George Poyzer, Christopher Stump and Messrs. Rappier, Turner, Spriggs, et. al. became the leading men of the keelboat business in Nashville. The principal export items of Nashville included tobacco, corn, indigo, hogs, horses, flour and cotton. But Nashville was not alone, Jefferson was also exporting produce. The flatboat Kitty, John Smith, Master and the flatboat Salley McGee, James K. Benson, Master, arrived at New Orleans on the first of May 1805, with cargoes of corn. The corn had been shipped by Mark Mitchell from Jefferson on Stone's River. Later in 1807, the settlement near Cummins Mill sent a flatboat carrying a 40 ton cargo of farm produce down the river to the market in Nashville.<sup>39</sup>

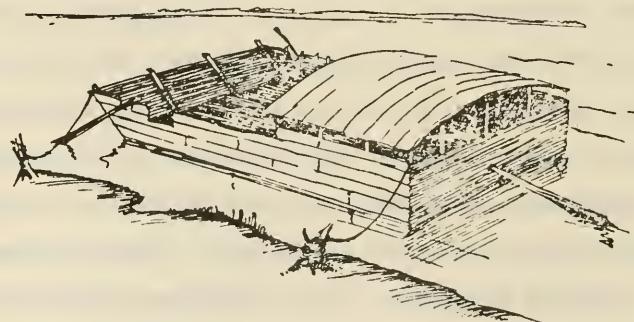


Figure 8: Flatboat

In the spring of 1805, John Coffee joined with Andrew Jackson and John Hutchings as business partners and formed the firm of Jackson, Hutchings and Company. The firm owned and operated the Jackson store at Clover Bottom near the Lebanon turnpike bridge over Stone's River. The store sold some items that had come from Philadelphia, where Jackson had purchased them in 1804. He had the merchandise sent by wagon to Pittsburgh and from there by boat to the mouth of the Cumberland River where they transferred the goods into John Coffee's keelboat. Then Coffee brought it back to Clover Bottom on Stone's River. The items included whiskey, wine, brandy, nails, bottles, alum, sulphur, silk, linen, broadcloth, needles, thread, paper pins, buttons, combs, barrels of salt, sugar, flour, bacon, bar iron, shot and gunpowder.<sup>40</sup>

The business enterprise at Clover Bottom also received merchandise from New Orleans. Records of the Port of New Orleans indicate that the barge Relief, a large keelboat, Willis Wright, Master, departed there on 8 May 1809 bound for Stone's River with cargo for Jackson, Hutchings and Company.<sup>41</sup>

Coffee also managed a boatyard at Clover Bottom for the firm. The boatyard filled many contracts for the government and private individuals. Perhaps the most famous incident connected with the boatyard involved Aaron Burr. Jackson authorized Coffee to build 5 flatboats and purchase one keelboat for Burr. This took place in the latter part of 1805 and early 1806 during the time of Burr's conspiracy, and as a result, Burr received only two flatboats. The boats were built out of trees cut off Clover Bottom. The construction took place in an area adjacent to an oak tree near Jackson's store on the west bank of Stone's River just downstream from the Lebanon Pike bridge.<sup>42</sup>

Commercial traffic on Stone's River steadily increased over the years, even after the county seat of justice was moved from Jefferson to Murfreesboro. By 1815, Stone's River traffic included "rafts, flat-bottomed boats... barges, keelboats and other craft." Commerce on the river became so substantial that on 28 September 1815, the State established a state inspection station "on the banks of Stone's River," at Jefferson. This facility's personnel inspected agricultural goods. The inspector was to issue certificates of inspection to the shipmasters and to brand the barrels of goods, after they passed an inspection for quality, with the word "TENNESSEE". Shortly after the passage of this act by the General Assembly, Walter Kibble requested permit to construct a warehouse in Jefferson to aid in the inspection of export commodities. The Rutherford County Court granted his request and thus established a system of inspection for tobacco, flour, hemp, pork and other items for exportation. The court also appointed William W. Searcy, William A. Sublett and George Simpson as inspectors.<sup>43</sup>

B.M. Hurd, Tennessee State Commissioner of Agriculture in 1889, recalled, "...years ago I have seen cotton loaded on flatboats at Jefferson, the old county seat of Rutherford, floated down Stone's River to the Cumberland and thence to New Orleans."<sup>44</sup>

In 1816, Stone's River had a newer facility on its banks. A rafting ground was operated by Abram Maury DeGraffenread at that time. The area used by DeGraffenread was located on the west bank of the river just north of the mouth of Hurricane Creek approximately 18 miles from the mouth of the river. DeGraffenread owned 320 acres of land in the area and was apparently cutting timber off the land in order to build and launch rafts at the river

Timber rafts as a means of transport had been widely used prior to the Revolutionary War and for many years afterward. It was a standard practice for an immigrant family to purchase a timber raft and float to their destination and after arrival, they would sell the timber at a profit. Another use of timber rafts was a simple means of getting timber to sawmills and markets in order to be sold. DeGraffenread's rafting ground was adjacent to Brooking Burnett's mill and the Methodist meeting house. From such an advantageous location, DeGraffenread could have engaged in either rafting transports or commercial timber rafting. The exact business conducted at the rafting ground is not known. DeGraffenread only operated the rafting ground for a short time from 1814 until selling the property in 1819 after his removal from Tennessee to Alabama.<sup>45</sup>

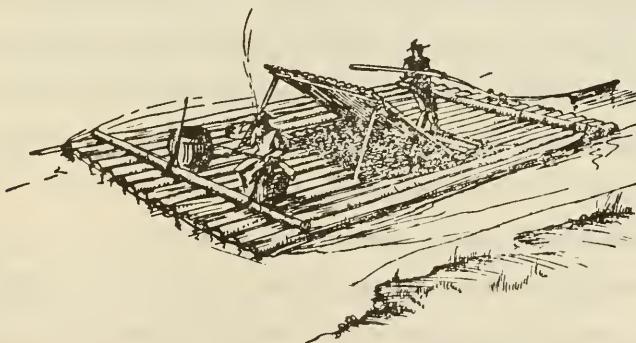


Figure 9: Raft

During this decade, Jefferson continued to flourish as a river port of considerable importance. Along the river banks at the foot of Main Street were Jefferson's wharves where many barges and flatboats were loaded

and unloaded. Many boats were also built there. Boats from Jefferson ran from there to Nashville during these years navigating both upstream and downstream. Several of these craft measured 70 feet in length. Due to lower water levels in the river, the larger boats descended the river once a year, while the smaller craft could make the trip during three-fourths of the year. Although these vessels were involved in regular commercial trade and transportation, many local residents were involved in an active fur trade with merchants in Nashville via small boats and pirogues.<sup>46</sup>

The decade of the 1820's was one of great interest in navigation and the residents of Stone's River and its area were no exception. On 26 July 1820, the General Assembly legally extended the navigation of the West Fork from Jefferson to Samuel Bowman's mill. Present-day Nice's Mill about 6 miles upriver from Jefferson, is thought to be located on the Bowman Mill site. The Assembly passed a law on 26 November 1825, which effected Stone's River navigation in both Davidson and Rutherford Counties. This act imposed a \$50 fine on all those obstructing the river and applied the money thus obtained to the improvement of the river.<sup>47</sup> These were only the beginning of developments for Stone's River during this time.

Records of the Tennessee Legislature reveal that in 1803, 1815, 1819, 1820, 1831 and 1832 laws were enacted that authorized the construction of mill dams on Stone's River. As part of the law, each dam would incorporate a navigation lock to insure the safe passage of watercraft. This was the means that the Assembly used to maintain an open navigation of the river. However, the residents interested in the river's navigation saw many threats to their interests via mill dams and other obstructions. Perhaps this view

of threats to navigation was the impetus behind the long battle to prevent obstruction of the river. This battle was the underlying cause of the legislation of 1827. This was "an act to authorize lotteries for the purpose of opening and improving the navigation of Stone's River...from the junction of the east, and west forks, of said river at Jefferson, Rutherford county, to its confluence with Cumberland River." Section I of this act listed the names of the Rutherford County men that were appointed as managers to draft a scheme for the lottery effecting the Stone's River. These men were:

Glover W. Banton, Burwell Perry, Elisha Sanders, Thomas Shaw, Theophilus Sharp, Islah Faris, Samuel Watkins, John Hoover, William Alford, Henry Ridley, John M'Griger, John Knight, Lewis Watkins, William Lannum, Robert Freeman, John Martin, Brooking Burnett, William P. King, Edward Gregory, William Bouman, William Sneed, Robert L. Weakley, John M. Sharp, Moses Ridley, David Wendle, James C. Moore, George A. Sublett, William W. Searcy, James Martin, John C. Clements, Ota Cantrell, John Parks, Baker Wrather, William H. Smith, Isaac Sanders, Joel H. Barton, Moses G. Beavers, Absolem Gleaves, James Ridley, William Stewart, Joseph Kimbro, James Sharp, Constant Hardeman, Matthew M'Lanahan, Edwin Sharp, Samuel P. Black, Robert Jetton, Samuel Anderson, William Robb, and Russell Dance.

This lottery was designed to raise \$30,000 as specified in the legislative  
act.  
48

The most significant event of the 1820's era in the history of Stone's River navigation took place in Jefferson. At this locale, several local boatbuilders teamed together with Constant Hardeman and laid the keel for a steamboat. This was done in the wake of the arrival of the first steamboats in Nashville during 1819. These steamers had come from the Ohio River. No steamers had been built at that time in the Cumberland Basin. Hardeman and the Jefferson residents saw the advantage of having a steamer on Stone's River and thus conceived the idea of building their own steamer. When the

hull of the vessel was built and completed, it was floated down the river to Nashville for outfitting with a steam plant and other equipment. The steamer was described as being about 100 tons burthen. Hardeman's vessel was the first and only steamer ever built in Jefferson and probably was the first steamer ever built in the Central Basin area of Tennessee. The vessel reputedly made many trips between Jefferson and Nashville, however some accounts say that the river proved to be too shallow for steamboat navigation. Today, it is suspected that Hardeman's steamer became the Emerald and was employed in the Nashville trade.

Steamboating became the rage and by 1825, 57% of all the freight in the west was reaching the New Orleans markets via steamers. Nashville had become a steamboating center by 1821 and steamers were reaching New Orleans from Nashville in 22 days as compared to 87 days one-way for a keelboat. However, steam navigation was restricted to relatively short periods of high water thus rendering the outlying districts, such as Rutherford County, dependent on either keelboats or wagons for their import trade. The decade of the 1830's also brought the construction of turnpikes leading to and from Nashville. Rutherford County was thus connected in 1831 to Nashville via the Nashville, Murfreesboro and Shelbyville turnpike. This enabled farmers to more easily get produce to market by wagons going into Nashville. To add to the situation, 1830 ushered in a railroad fever that enveloped the people in the county. All these factors combined to push river traffic into a period of sluggish activity.

The two decades between 1830 and 1850 were periods of relative inactivity for commerce along Stone's River. Jefferson's fur trade with Nashville was

dying out. Some goods such as grain were rafted to Nashville for the steam-boat trade, but the majority of import merchandise was hauled into Jefferson by wagons, pack-horses and mules from Nashville. Then in 1847, the railroad was constructed through Smyrna and Jefferson's freight was hauled there for shipment. Thus a gradual change was beginning to take place. The river was embarking on another phase of its history.<sup>51</sup>

On the 7th of November 1853, the Rutherford County Court sent a petition to the General Assembly concerning the navigation of Stone's River. The petition was protesting some previous requests to the Assembly to enact laws for the obstruction of the river. The petition informed the Assembly that the navigation of Stone's River was a "matter of great importance to the citizens of Rutherford County." In the continuing information contained in the petition, the river is called "a great highway to market."<sup>52</sup> Thus the petition tells of the river's rising new industry, i.e., the floating of cedar timber rafts to the sawmills and lumber markets of Nashville and elsewhere.



Figure 10: Keelboat as represented on the Tennessee State Seal

## THE TIMBER RAFTING ERA

According to Dixon Merritt, Wilson County historian, the timber industry in the Cumberland Basin began in the 1840's when a Englishman named Hiram Drennon brought a colony of lumbermen from East Tennessee. Drennon's workers set out by cutting red cedar timber along Falls Creek in an area that today is covered by portions of Wilson and Rutherford Counties. Once the timber was cut, it was rafted down Falls Creek to Stone's River. From the river, the rafts could then be taken to Nashville. By 1853, cedar timber rafts that floated down the river had increased Rutherford County's commerce by \$50-100 thousand per year. From the heart of the red cedar belt, the old river port of Jefferson was chosen as a rendezvous for the rafts and as a staging area for raft construction and launching. The rafts were floated downstream every spring and fall during periods of high water. In the 1850's and 1860's, logs were piled up on the East Fork near the confluence with the West Fork at Jefferson and here rafts were built and launched. There probably was another similar staging area at the mouth of Falls Creek about 5 miles downriver from Jefferson. When the raftsman floated the rafts to Nashville and had sold the timber, many walked back home to the Jefferson area.

53

Logs for these rafts of timber were cut between 10 and 16 feet long. The average Cumberland River raft was 200 feet in length and a single tier in width. Large rafts were 2 or 3 tiers in width and about 250 long, although lengths and widths were variable. Average rafts were manned by a crew of 5 men and a pilot. Of these, 3 men were assigned to the bow oar and 2 men to the stern oar. The pilot was generally called "the captain" and the crews

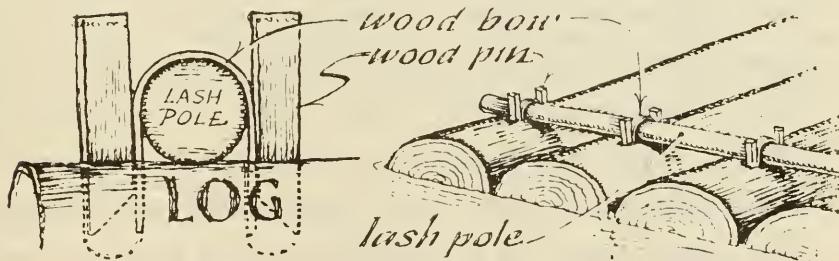
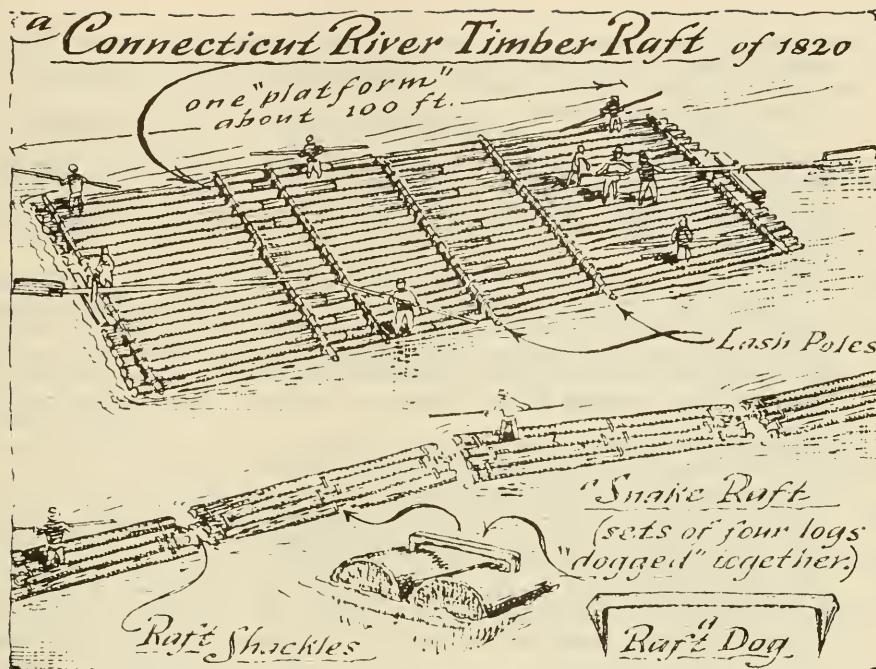


Figure 11: The Days of River Rafting

were referred to as "river rats". Perhaps one of the best known of Stone's River's raft captains was Captain Jack O. Lannom. Captain Lannom in 1886 had been rafting on the river for over 30 years. Lannom's rafting days were known as those in which the river was "famous for the number of rafts run down it."<sup>54</sup>

There is a "knack" in steering a raft and in the way they are launched, landed and tied up. Therefore the pilot and crew had to be aware and cautious while rafting, because it was dangerous business. Stone's River was a very hazardous river due to the high rock bluffs in the turns of the river. If the raftsmen lost control of a raft in a turn the current could force the raft into the rock bluff at a speed high enough to cause a crash. If the craft crashed into the bluff, not only would the raft break up and the logs be lost but lives could be lost as well. Raftsmen Tom Arnold of Rutherford County's Fall Creek area, was known to have been in such a crash, however none of the crew were injured. His raft was broken up, logs lost and he was forced to swim for his life as huge logs crowded around him in the river's current. Another such accident involved a death. During an early spring raft trip, Robert Green Lannom died in 1860 as a result of his raft breaking up near Jones' Mill on Stone's River. Lannom drowned while attempting to reach safety. Jones' Mill is presently the site of Youth, Inc. camp on the Percy Priest Lake about 28 miles from the mouth of the river.<sup>55</sup>

Huge quantities of Stone's River red cedar was shipped to Louisiana, Mississippi, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. Many of the mansions in Cincinnati, Ohio were built of Stone's River cedar. The industry grew steadily from the 1840's but the Civil War temporarily stopped the exportation of timber rafts.

After the war, the timber industry catapulted to reach huge proportions. In 1882, about 1400 rafts had tied up on the river at Nashville. At the close of the year, the Nashville sawmills handled lumber valued at \$3,372,000. By 1884, the twenty mills in Nashville handled 86,165,000 feet of lumber. Between 1900 and 1904, it is estimated that the total lumber handled by the Nashville mills exceeded 100,000,000 feet, ie., a gross annual income of better than \$8 million. With Stone's River red cedar timber rafts, Nashville became one of the outstanding hardwood lumber centers of the United States.<sup>56</sup>

One of the most unusual uses of the Stone's River cedar was that use of trees taken from the cedar lands along present-day Percy Priest Lake. These trees were floated down the river to be used as telephone poles. Many were floated to Nashville where they were made into rails for the street cars pulled by mules.<sup>57</sup>

Rafting was done during periods of high water and thus was greatly effected by the weather. Weather conditions have always had an influence on the river and they have always been an important part of the river's history.

## THE WEATHER AND THE RIVER

Stone's River, like other rivers, has had problems in the past due to certain weather conditions. Heavy rains have increased water levels thus resulting in floods, freezes in winter have caused ice gorges and flooding during thaws, and droughts have created periods of low water or in severe cases, almost no water at all. An excellent guage for many such events are the records of weather conditions and the resulting effects concerning the Cumberland River at Nashville. Logically, whatever occurred on the Cumberland likely happened on the Stone's River.

Droughts are generally caused by lengthy periods of no precipitation. There are a few recorded instances of very low water. Local newspapers announced that in November of 1818, the Cumberland River at Nashville was "too low to be navigated" by steamboats. The next November, the Cumberland was very dry. That year the newspapers were publishing the fact that the river was the lowest it had been since 1784. One reporter wrote, "There is not enough water in several places to float an empty boat..." The Stone's River must have also experienced these same periods of low water. One example of low water on the Stone's was in 1805, when Jackson, Hutchings and Company could not bring their keelboats down the river because there was less than 18 inches of water in the channel.<sup>58</sup>

Winter freezes probably caused more dangerous situations for steamboats and keelboats than for the residents along the banks. The worst freeze on the Cumberland was in 1832 when wagons were able to cross the ice at Nashville for 2 entire weeks. The river was again frozen over in 1856 and again in 1872. Later freezes occurred in 1876, 1893, 1905, and 1940. Due to the

simple fact of extremely cold weather, Stone's River must have indeed frozen over just like the Cumberland River.<sup>59</sup>

Large amounts of rainfall increase the amount of water runoff and thus can cause flood conditions. The flood stage of the Cumberland River at Nashville is 40 feet. The Cumberland has experienced waters higher than this level in 1808, 1815, 1826, 1847, 1850, 1862, 1865, 1867, 1882, 1886, 1890, 1902, 1912, 1915, 1927, 1928, 1935 and 1937. The highest of these was the 1927 flood which was a record breaker. This particular flood crested at 56.2 feet in Nashville. However, the 1902 flood was the record breaker for Stone's River. The record high water of 1902 was followed by another period of almost record high water in 1948. In the 1902 flood, about 11 inches of rain fell in 24 hours during a storm that covered an area from Nashville to McMinnville. The downpour continued for a total of 38 hours. This storm occurred between March 26th and March 29th, 1902, however the high water continued on into the month of April. At the public square in the village of Jefferson, the high water created an island of the hilltop there. Nashville newspapers carried complete reports on the flood's effects in Rutherford County.<sup>60</sup>

The following contemporary accounts describe the catastrophe that came to Murfreesboro and Rutherford County in 1902 as a flood.

"At Murfreesboro the water was 3 feet deep on the tracks at the passenger station...A bridge 30 feet in length just north of the passenger station was washed out. It was hit by a floating house. The Salem turnpike county bridge was washed away and against the railroad structure between the passenger station and freight station and both passed on down the stream...Train No. 5 leaving Nashville yesterday afternoon at 3:30 P.M. for Chattanooga is tied up at the National Cemetery 3 miles north of Murfreesboro.

The train is due at Murfreesboro at 4:48 P.M. and almost reached the railroad bridge across Stone's River about 2 miles north of the depot, when it ran into high water. The Engineer said that he could not go through and....backed the train to the National Cemetery to telephone back to headquarters for orders... When they left the telephone to return to the train they found that the water had risen in a long depression between them and the railroad tracks and that the train was standing in water about 2 feet deep. It was 3 or 4 hours before the water had subsided sufficiently for them to get back...but as far as can be learned it is almost certain that 10 bridges over Stone's River have been washed away....The bridge over Stone's River on the Manson Pike has left its moorings and washed against the railroad bridge; where the current is rapidly beating it into pieces and endangering the railroad bridge. The Franklin road bridge, the Salem turnpike bridge are also reported as wrecked. Part of Ransom's Mill on Stone's River is gone and two bridges are reported washed away on the Woodbury pike. It seems that the rainfall was general throughout the county and that both forks of Stone's River are higher than ever known in the history of the county. Indeed the height to which both forks rose has staggered the oldest inhabitants beyond the power of comparison. The waters stood for several hours over the counters in the stores in Readyville on the East Fork of Stone's River. The West Fork washed away Dr. Elam's mill and swept the post house off its foundations. The bridges over the Shelbyville, Salem, Franklin, Manson and Nashville pikes are gone. The East Fork has washed away the Lascassas bridge, the Pierce's Mill bridge, the Readyville bridge, the Burton bridge and The Woodbury bridge. The Cripple Creek bridge on Woodbury pike and the bridge on the Manchester pike are the the only bridges of any consequence left in the county.... Lewis' mill near Jefferson was completely ruined, and not a great distance away the store house and dwelling of T.E. Bell was lifted from its foundations and carried away by the flood. Mr. Drak's barn near Walter Hill was washed away....Damage will be from \$250,000 to \$300,000."

These were the contemporary newspaper accounts of the flood from the Nashville point of view. No doubt the Murfreesboro newspapers carried more detailed accounts, although these have not survived.

### CONCLUSION

In 1853, the Rutherford County Court petitioned the Tennessee General Assembly concerning the Stone's River. The petition indicates that the turnpikes seemed to have diminished river commerce. Railroads no doubt played a great role in switching commercial transportation route thus putting an end to river trade. This seems to be more of the truth behind the demise of river traffic rather than lower water levels in the river or the removal of the county seat of justice from Jefferson to Murfreesboro. The traffic and trade along Stone's River fell victim to the "progress" of the advances in the technology of transportation. But even so, the petition reminds one that the "navigation of said Stone's River....being a matter of great importance to the citizens of Rutherford County...(provided) a great highway to market."<sup>62</sup> As such, the commercial developments of river transportation and the like caused economic prosperity and thus caused the county to greatly flourish. In addition, many settlers and pioneers as well as later residents followed the "natural Highway" of Stone's River into the county. In the final analysis, Stone's River has played an enormously important role in the development of Rutherford County.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> John Gerald Parchment, "A Limnological Study of Stone's River, Tennessee" (PhD dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1961), p. 9, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Parchment, p. 13, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Richard M. Ketchum, ed., The American Heritage Picture History of The Civil War (New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc., 1960), p. 283, 284, 289; Leona Taylor Aiken, Donelson, Tennessee: Its Landmarks and History (Kingsport, TN: Kingsport Press, Inc., 1968), p. 117.

<sup>4</sup> John R. Swanton, The Indian Tribes of North America, Smithsonian Institution, American Bureau of Ethnology, Bulletin #145 (United States Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1952), p. 227; Byrd Douglas, Steamboatin' on the Cumberland (Nashville, TN: Tennessee Book Co., 1961), p. xii; Charles A. Miller, The Official and Political Manual of the State of Tennessee, 1890 edition, (The Reprint Company, Publishers: Spartanburg, S.C., 1974), p. 8; Stanley J. Folmsbee, Robert E. Corlew, and Enoch L. Mitchell, Tennessee: A Short History (Knoxville, TN: University of Knoxville Press, 1969), p. 32.

<sup>5</sup> Douglas, p. xii; Swanton, p. 227; Leland R. Johnson, Engineers on the Twin Rivers: A History of the Nashville District, Corps of Engineers, United States Army (Nashville, TN: U.S. Army Engineer District, 1978), p. 6; Folmsbee, Corlew, and Mitchell, p. 32.

<sup>6</sup> Douglas, p. xiii; Aiken, p. 104, 105.

<sup>7</sup> Ursula Smith Beach, Along the Warioto: or a History of Montgomery County, Tennessee (Nashville, TN: McQuiddy Press, 1964), p. 13; Parchment, p. 13; Carlton C. Sims, ed., History of Rutherford County (TN) (Murfreesboro, TN: Carlton C. Sims, 1947), p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Johnson, p. 1-4.

<sup>9</sup> Parchment, p. 17.

<sup>10</sup> Beach, p. 13.

<sup>11</sup> Douglas, p. xiii-xiv.

<sup>12</sup> Beach, p. 55; David B. Guralnik, ed., Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, Second College Edition (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980), p. 1084; Johnson, p. 6-7; Herbert Quick and Edward Quick, Mississippi Steamboatin': A History of Steamboating on the Mississippi and Its Tributaries (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1926), p. 8-9.

<sup>13</sup> Douglas, p. xiii.

<sup>14</sup> Aiken, p. 104-105.

<sup>15</sup> Quick and Quick, p. 12-13; William A. Baker, Sloops and Shallop (Barre, MA: Barre Publishing Company, 1966), p. 129.

<sup>16</sup> Leland D. Baldwin, The Keelboat Age on Western Waters (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1941), p. 42.

<sup>17</sup> Baldwin, p. 148-153.

<sup>18</sup> Baldwin, p. 47.

<sup>19</sup> Baldwin, p. 47-48.

<sup>20</sup> Balthasar Henry Meyer, ed., History of Transportation in the United States Before 1860 (Forge Village, MA: Murray Printing Company, 1948), p. 97.

<sup>21</sup> Aiken, p. 104, 308.

<sup>22</sup> Sims, p. 11, 12.

<sup>23</sup> Aiken, p. 225; Davidson County, Tennessee, Register's Office, Deed Book A, p. 166, 210.

<sup>24</sup> Meyer, p. 100.

<sup>25</sup> Aiken, p. 80; Stanley John Folmsbee, Sectionalism and Internal Improvements in Tennessee, 1796-1845 (Knoxville, TN: The East Tennessee Historical Society, 1939), p. 14-15.

<sup>26</sup> Sims, p. 18; Goodspeed Publishing Company, History of Tennessee, with sketches of Maury, Williamson, Rutherford, Wilson, Bedford and Marshall Counties (Nashville, TN: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1886), p. 811.

<sup>27</sup> Sims, p. 17.

<sup>28</sup> Sims, p. 11, 17, 18, 19.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Perkins Abernethy, From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee: A Study of Frontier Democracy (University, AL: University of Alabama, 1967), p. 199, 200, 201; Meyer, p. 103; Folmsbee, p. 15-16.

<sup>30</sup> Baldwin, p. 44-45; Abernethy, p. 199.

<sup>31</sup> Samuel Anderson Weakley, "Cumberland River Floods Since the Settlement of the Basin With Special Reference to Nashville, Tennessee" (Civil Engineer thesis, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, 1935), p. 26.

<sup>32</sup> "Determination of Navigability for Stone's River, Including East and West Forks", Waterways Management Division, Operations Division, Nashville District Engineers, United States Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville, Tennessee, 15 April 1975. (hereafter cited Navigability Report.)

<sup>33</sup> Douglas, p. 11; Gordon T. Chappel, "The Life and Activities of General John Coffee," Tennessee Historical Quarterly I (1942): 127.

<sup>34</sup> John D. Barbee, "Navigation and River Improvement in Middle Tennessee, 1807-1834" (M.A. thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1934), p. 10; Douglas, p. 17, 18.

<sup>35</sup> Goodspeed, p. 833; Johnson, p. 24; Interview with Ernest King Johns, Rutherford County Historical Society, Smyrna, Tennessee, 9 July 1981, in reference to the photograph of the mill site in Rutherford County Historical Society Publication No. 6, p. 80.

<sup>36</sup> Goodspeed, p. 833; Kevin Markuson, "A History of the Town of Jefferson, 1803-1813", Rutherford County Historical Society Publication No. 17 (Summer 1981), p. 3; John R. Bedford, "Tour in 1807 Down the Cumberland", Tennessee Historical Magazine 5 (April 1919): 40-41.

<sup>37</sup> Goodspeed, p. 837.

<sup>38</sup> Goodspeed, p. 813.

<sup>39</sup> Johnson, p. 15; Sims, p. 222.

<sup>40</sup> Gordon T. Chappel, "The Life and Activities of General John Coffee", Tennessee Historical Quarterly I (1942): 128; Aiken, p. 78, 79, 80.

<sup>41</sup> Navigability Report

<sup>42</sup> Gordon T. Chappel, "The Life and Activities of General John Coffee," Tennessee Historical Quarterly I (1942): 128; Aiken, p. 81-82, 94-95.

<sup>43</sup> Act of Tennessee, 28 September 1815 cited in Navigability Report; Rutherford County, Tennessee, County Clerk's Office, County Court Minute Book I, p. 120.

<sup>44</sup> Navigability Report

<sup>45</sup> Rutherford County, Tennessee, County Court Clerk's Office, County Court Minute Book I, p. 115; Rutherford County, Tennessee, County Register's Office, Deed Book K, p. 221; Deed Book M, p. 476.

<sup>46</sup> Goodspeed, p. 833; Sims, p. 222; Interview with Everett Waller, Smyrna, Tennessee, 15 July 1981; 1853 petition of Rutherford County Court cited in Navigability Report; Markuson, p. 38; Ed Bell, "Rising Water to Banish Old Town," Rutherford Courier, Smyrna, Tennessee, 17 August 1967.

<sup>47</sup>Acts of Tennessee, 26 July 1820 and 26 November 1825 as cited in Navigability Report.

<sup>48</sup>Barbee, p. 42; Acts of Tennessee 1827 (Knoxville, TN: State Printer, 1827), Chapter CLIX, p. 133-134.

<sup>49</sup>Bell, Rutherford Courier, 17 August 1967; Sims, p. 222; Goodspeed, p. 833; Douglas, p. 19; Barbee, p. 64; Embree, ed., The Western Boatman, Vol. I, No. 3 (May 1848) courtesy Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

<sup>50</sup>Barbee, p. 29, 24, 13; Folmsbee, p. 15, 16, 17; Baldwin, p. 66; Goodspeed, p. 816; Sims, p. 222.

<sup>51</sup>Interview with Everett Waller, Smyrna, Tennessee, 15 July 1981.

<sup>52</sup>1853 Rutherford County Court petition as cited in Navigability Report.

<sup>53</sup>Navigability Report; Interview with Everett Waller, Smyrna, Tennessee, 15 July 1981; Douglas, p. 236.

<sup>54</sup>Douglas, p. 236; Navigability Report.

<sup>55</sup>Douglas, p. 237; Interview with Everett Waller, Smyrna, Tennessee, 15 July 1981; Interview with Ernest King Johns, Rutherford County Historical Society, Smyrna, Tennessee, 4 August 1981; James W. Patton, "History of the Lannom Family", Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1968, courtesy of Ernest King Johns, Smyrna, Tennessee.

<sup>56</sup>Navigability Report; Douglas, p. 234, 235.

<sup>57</sup>Aiken, p. 338.

<sup>58</sup>Weakley, p. 31-32; Aiken, p. 81.

<sup>59</sup>Douglas, p. 373-374.

<sup>60</sup>Douglas, p. 373; Interview with Everett Waller, Smyrna, Tennessee, 15 July 1981; Weakley, p. 11, 12, 146.

<sup>61</sup>Weakley, p. 149-150.

<sup>62</sup>1853 Rutherford County Court petition as cited in Navigability Report.

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Figure 1: from map "State of Tennessee", Scale 1:500,000, United States Department of The Interior, Geological Survey: Washington, D.C., 1959.

Figure 2: from frontispiece, Larry E. Ivers, British Drums on the Southern Frontier: The Military Colonization of Georgia, 1733 - 1749. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1974.

Figure 3: from p. 14-15, Transportation Economics Division, Tennessee Valley Authority, A History of Navigation on the Tennessee River System. Washington, D.C.: United States Printing Office, 1937.

Figure 4: from Library of Congress print, p. 15, Nicholas Perkins Hardeman, Wilderness Calling: The Hardeman Family in the American Westward Movement, 1750 - 1900. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1977.

Figure 5: from p. 180 Leona Taylor Aiken, Donelson, Tennessee: Its Landmarks and History. Kingsport, TN: Kingsport Press, Inc., 1968.

Figure 6: from p. 43, Leland D. Baldwin, The Keelboat Age on Western Waters. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1941.

Figure 7: from p. 14-15, T.V.A., History of Navigation on the Tennessee River System.

Figure 8: from p. 14-15, T.V.A., History of Navigation on the Tennessee River System.

Figure 9: from p. 14-15, T.V.A., History of Navigation on the Tennessee River System.

Figure 10: from the SEAL OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, shown on the cover of Jesse Burt, Your Tennessee. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company, 1974.

Figure 11: from p. 42-45, Eric Sloane, A Museum of Early American Tools. New York: Ballantine Books, 1964.

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## CORRECTIONS of PREVIOUS PUBLICATIONS

Publication # 17, Summer 1981.

"Murfreesboro's Old City Cemetery: A Record of the Past," p. 55, 2nd paragraph. Murfreesboro "was named Cannonsburgh, after the governor." Clarification: Cannonsburgh was named in honor of Newton Cannon, an emerging young politician who had settled in Williamson County. He was not governor at the time. He became governor twenty-four years later and served 1835-1839.

C. C. Sims, A History of Rutherford County (reprint 1981), pp. 25 & 34.

P. 55, 2nd paragraph. Co. Hardy Murfree "provided the land... which became the square." Correction: William Lytle gave sixty acres of land for the establishment of a new seat of justice, present site of the Murfreesboro square.

Sims, p. 25.

P. 67, 3rd paragraph. "Murfree gave his daughter..." Correction: Col. Hardy Murfree passed away in 1809 before his daughter, Sallie, married James Maney, July 23, 1812. The court divided up the Colonel's property, Dec. 14, 1814. Sallie's inheritance included the 274 acre land grant made to Ezekial White.

Robert M. McBride, Oaklands (Tn. Historical Quarterly, reprint, Dec., 1963), pp. 3-4.

Oakland Association Docent Guidebook, Information, pp. 6-7.

P. 68, 2nd paragraph. James and Sallie Maney had eight children. Two not mentioned in the article were Lewis Meredith Maney and Mary Maney. Lewis was born August 5, 1823 and died March 16, 1882. He married Rachel Adeline Cannon, daughter of Newton Cannon, in 1846. Birth and death dates ascribed to Mary Maney are inconsistent relating to other relevant information. In 1836, however, she married Edwin A. Keeble, outstanding Murfreesboro lawyer, editor, and mayor of the city.

Tombstones, Evergreen Cemetery.

McBride, p 6.

Oaklands Association Docent Guidebook, Information, p. 7.  
Family Bible at Oaklands Mansion.

NOTE: Much information in Oaklands by Robert M. McBride is inaccurate in light of continuing research at the Mansion.

Publication # 16, Winter 1981.

"The Story of Fosterville, " p. 43, 3rd paragraph. Clarification relating to location of Fosterville on NC& StL Rwy...Fosterville originally located on Nashville & Chattanooga Rwy. Presently located on Louisville and Nashville RR.

P. 46, 4th paragraph, relating to railroad line completed... Nashville & Chattanooga Rwy. completed 1851. N&C Rwy. acquired Nashville & Northwestern RR 1872, becoming by order of the court, Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Rwy., 1873.

Richard E. Prince, Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway(Green River, Wy.: Richard E. Prince, 1967) pp. 6 & 18.

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